

SREE GOPALAKRISHNAYYA

GUMMIDITHALA VENKATA SUBBARAO

CHECKED-75



GOSHTI BOOK-HOUSE

AMALAPURAM, ANDHRA PRADESH

First Edition : 5055 Sravanam, 1935
Second Edition : 5068 Jyestam, 1967 July

©

By Author

Price

Full Calico Rs. 10-00

Ordinary Rs. 7-50

Printed at the Triveni Press, Machilipatnam

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
Foreword	
Preface	
i Early Period (1889 - 1911)	1
ii Stay in Britain (1911 - '16)	6
iii Early Aspirations	14
iv In Government Service (1917 - '18)	18
v At the Jateeya Kalasala	23
vi Plunge into Life : Starting of the Vidyapeetha Goshti	26
vii On National Education	37
viii Chirala-Perala : Its Causes	45
ix Chirala-Perala : The Ramadandu	53
x Chirala-Perala : Some Incidents and Events	63
xi The Berhampore Trial	74
xii The Second Trial	82
xiii Chirala-Perala : Its Effects	92
xiv Some Non-co-operation Politics	97
xv Jail Message	106
xvi On Brahman, Brahmins and Brahmanism	109
xvii Rise and Growth of Brahmanism	112
xviii Decay of Brahminism	121
xix Sounding the Gong	125
xx Post-jail Utterances	127
xxi Soundarya Mahal Speech	135
xxii Masulipatam Speech	139
xxiii Vivekananda and Gopalakrishnayya	145
xxiv Pilgrimage to Gaya and Kasi	150
xxv As Congress Secretary	158
xxvi Cocanada Congress	163
xxvii Period of Conferences	171
xxviii A. P. C. C. Meeting of July 1924	177
xxix Some P. C. C. Affairs	183
xxx Rearrival at Ramnagar	187

xxxi	The Few Forlorn Hopes at Bezwada	192
xxxii	From the Human to the Divine Path	197
xxxiii	Last Intrusion into Politics	201
xxxiv	Author of the Chakra Flag	210
xxxv	Closing years of Life (1926—'28)	213
xxxvi	The End which was but a Beginning (1928)	216
xxxvii	Gopalakrishna : The Man	220
	Swasti	226



AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This second edition of the Biography of the Andhra Ratna is a reprint of the "Life and Message of D. Gopalakrishnayya," written at the instance of Gopalakrishnayya's German friend, Miss Christel Semisch, and originally published in 1935, but revised and brought up to date suitably. This publication has been made possible because of the munificent subsidy granted by our State Government, on the initiative of its dynamic Director of Public Instruction, Sri M. V. Rajagopal, to whom any thanks are due first of all. From the public standpoint, the contribution signifies the change that has come over the country during the last thirty years, because, it will be remembered that the "Life and Message", at the time of its publication, was banned from use in our public libraries, and a grant of Rs. 500 by the Guntur Municipality for the Goshti Publications was vetoed by the then Government of Madras; and actually, one of the Governor's Advisers, Sir T. G. Rutherford, told me: "Anything that smacks of Duggirala or Sitaramaraju, we shall treat as suspect." To show how far we have travelled since those days, I may cite the following facts. That an abridged edition of the Andhra Ratna could become a non-detailed text-book in English for the Andhra Matriculation in 1954; that the biography of the valiant Sitaramaraju could be published under auspices of the State Government itself; that a sum of Rs. 10,000 was granted for an Andhra Ratna statue at Chirala; and in the present case, that the Government, of its own volition, should have helped to bring out this publication; — all these indicate the great change that has come over the country during this period. And no wonder that the names of persons like Tilak and Gandhi, Aurobindo and C. R. Das, Gopalakrishnayya and Nehru, which were at one time deemed as anathema by the then ruling authorities, are now being reckoned among our 'Nation-builders' in the country. Not that everything is yet O. K. in the process of this 'Nationalisation' here; but the facts cited above are sufficient, I suppose, to show that the process has been begun and is well on.

So far as the Andhra Ratna is concerned, what are his claims for our consideration and remembrance by posterity? In answer to this question, I shall posit some criteria concerning the weal of the Nation, and leave it to the readers themselves to judge, in the light of the facts mentioned in each case and the circumstances detailed in the pages that follow. Thus :

1. It is generally agreed that the present education in the country is unnational, if not degenerate, and that a system of 'National Education' is urgently needed here. Of all our recent thinkers, next to Swami Vivekananda, it was the Andhra Ratna who put his mind into the subject, and gave us a scheme (Chapter VII), which, along with the rest of them, is worthy of consideration by those at the helm of our educational affairs in the country.

2. Gopalakrishnayya's Chirala-Perala was easily the best organised campaign of 'non-violent resistance' against a 'Satanic Government' in those days; and as the great S. Sreenivasa Iyengar once remarked, 'As between Bardoli and Chirala, the former was more fortunate.' And as the hero of such a campaign, the Andhra Ratna is legitimately entitled to our homage.

3. There is an aspect of this Chirala campaign which bears to be recalled. Chirala-Perala, no doubt, was a Municipal affair; but in Gopalakrishnayya's hands, it became a political battle par excellence. And the essence of his contribution, it will be seen, was as an experiment in running a Parallel Government which was a vital need for a nation struggling to be free, but its lessons, alas! were mostly lost upon the country. No wonder that, after the failure of the 'Quit India' in 1942, our distinguished countryman, Sree Jai Prakash Narain, bemoaned that the movement had failed because there was no Parallel Government in the country. What a wisdom after the event!

4. In regard to the designation of our *Swaraj* as 'Rama Rajya,' Gopalakrishnayya was easily the preceptor, and Gandhiji the adopter.

5. For prescribing the 'Four Freedoms' for our humanity, viz., food for all, clothing for all, shelter for all, and freedom to worship one's own *Ishta Daivam* for all, Gopalakrishnayya was a fore-runner to President Roosevelt by at least twenty years.

6. In respect of the purification, integration and consolidation of the Hindu society; which every thinker and social worker deems as a dire need today, Gopalakrishnayya's views and position were unique. Because, it was he, more than any one else, who diagnosed that social and religious unification must precede our political emancipation. Nay, next to Swami Vivekananda, it was he who proclaimed Universal Brahminisation through the *Gayatri Mantra* as the only path for our redemption, and demanded the formulation of a new *Smriti* after the *Parasara Smriti* to suit our present times. And it is a sign of our times perhaps that forty-five years after Gopalakrishnayya had breathed forth that word, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad has taken up the idea and has been busying itself with its preliminaries today.

7. In regard to the Temple-entry movement, in an age of all-round iconoclasm, Gopalakrishnayya was the chief reviver of Temple-worship in the country, declaring that "An idol is a concretised ideal"; "The temple is the Nation's synthesis in the concrete; it is the embodied ideal of the race"; "National life is nowhere, not even in Mahatma Gandhi's 'Congresses' and 'masses'; it lives by the temple, it moves by the pilgrims' path, it sleeps in the feasts surfeit of the festival...it is there and nowhere else." Nay, in consonance with the spirit of our times, it was he who sponsored a 'Temple-for-all,' which Mahatma Gandhi took up with much gusto ten years later, in his Harijan movement.

8. For curing the many ills of our social and religious divisions and discord, Gopalakrishnayya's plea for universal "Sankarisation," through a revival of his famous *Advaita Siddhanta*, Vedantic thought and a goshti life, was a prophetic utterance, as may be judged by the developments of recent years, which unmistakably show that what India needs most,

what the world needs, is a new *Afratic* unity throughout the world, though of a dynamic variety, as he himself had put it.

9. Every one speaks nowadays of synthesisisation and federalisation of the world. But it is left only for a few to realise that such a synthesisisation can become possible only on the basis of *Dharma*. And among those few, it was again left to a Gopalakrishnayya alone to have proclaimed that :

“Swaraj, therefore, means the preservation of Hindu *Dharma*, Muslim *Dharma*, Christian *Dharma*, Parsi *Dharma*, Sikh *Dharma*, in short, the *Swadharma* of all and a co-ordinated federation of all, which are now being threatened with destruction by a positive godless philosophy, industrial anarchy, and spiritual famine that beset the world at the present moment.”

10. On the question of our Hindu-Muslim unity, which, every one agrees, is such a great desideration, on a par with such super-thinkers like Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo Ghose, it was left to the Andhra Ratna to have envisaged the problem and its solution most practically and pragmatically. Thus while he was the A. I. C. C. Secretary, on the eve of the Cocanada Congress, he declared, “The problem of unity is not a new one. Our friends, the Sikhs, are a standing example of one of the most glorious attempts made to evolve a unified Indian Nationality. An attempt at least as profound as that of Guru Nanakji and as that of Akbar Badshah should now be undertaken to effect the unified Indian National life... Let the Hindus admit Allah as one of the avatars and Quran as one of their puranas and welcome the Musalmans into the Brotherhood of a new homogeneous living Indian Society. And let the Musalmans, in their turn, welcome the Hindu as the new convert into his great democratic Brotherhood.” Again, early next month, he declared : “The removal of untouchability is to be interpreted in a comprehensive manner. To the Hindu, it enjoins the immediate purging of this age-old sin and stigma. To the Musalman, it argues religious tolerance. To the jealous Christian, it represents the fact of the existence of many a broker other than the Christ to the devine audience. To the

capitalist, it declares economic justice towards his humble labourers. It will be a social revolution of galore! Fancy, a complete coalescence of all castes! And yet this is the real import of the Constructive Programme."

11. If Gopalakrishnayya could thus envisage the nature of our National unification most correctly and unerringly, it was left to him equally to indicate the *modus operandi* for achieving the object. Thus, he declared: "Let all patriots put their heads together and take to the work, however stupendous it may be, at once, and without any hesitation. Let the Congress summon, on pain of India's peril, all the Maulanas and Pandits to contrive a formula of religious and social synthesis which can save mankind from the present distractions and discord. The Congress shall be asked to take up this great social problem. If, by contrivance, the spirit is released from its age-old social bonds into the free atmosphere of unimpeded self-expression, in its nascent impetuosity, it can blow up all the empires of egoism that have desecrated this God's beautiful Earth." And it is a pity, indeed, that even after twenty years of Independence, which, incidentally, was itself the product of a bad rupture of such a unity, our leaders are yet to plan a Grand Assembly of our wise men for evolving a new Code of Life for our people, which is perhaps the despair of our parties today.

12. But it is in regard to his well-known and colourful Ramadandu that the Andhra Ratna will be for ever known and remembered. Because, for a nation in the making, it is well known that a well-knit and disciplined volunteer organisation, in its lakhs and millions, is a *sine qua non*. And the glorious Ramadandu which he organised at Chirala in 1920-21, was the most shining example of a popular Volunteer Force ever established in the country. But, as in other things, that the Congress leaders would neither adopt it, nor could they build up any other organisation themselves till this day, is a sign of the woeful state of affairs in the country at present.

In all these respects, it will be observed that the Andhra Ratna, as a disciple of Dr. Ananda K. Coomara Swamy, had

promoted a new idealism--National Idealism, he himself called it,--which inspired his life and work while he lived ; and shall I not hope that, at this juncture of our national existence, that ideology will be of use to our countrymen, nay, serve as a beacon-light even for those living abroad? For, the divinity, equality and non-discrimination of mankind, irrespective of race or religion, caste or creed, sex or beauty, clime or virtue, so powerfully proclaimed by the Adi Sankara and so faithfully advocated by the Andhra Ratna;--who can deny that they constitute the Trinity of our human aspiration at present throughout the world? And so far as we, in India, are concerned, is not the Article 15 of the Constitution itself proof, if one is required, that such an *Advaitic* order is the need of our times? If this position is conceded, then, it follows that the subject of this publication will be deemed at least as a pioneer, if not a prophet yet, of the new life--the neo-Brahmin life--and religion that the Nation has got to build up, sooner or later, in our country, and in the world.

Lastly, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not offer any thanks once again, to the good Director of Public Instruction, Sri M. V. Rajagopal, and the Government of Andhra Pradesh, who have made this publication possible.

Goshti, Amalapuram, }
1st July 1967

G. V. SUBBARAO

To
Sree Gayatri,
Mother of the Veda,
Goddess of Letters and
Presiding Deity of Brahminism,
Ancient, Modern, Eternal.
Aum

SREE GOPALAKRISHNAYYA

CHAPTER I

EARLY PERIOD (1889-1911)

Andhraratna Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya was born on Jyesta Suddha Chathurdhi of Virodhi Samvatsara of the Telugu calendar (or the 2nd day of June 1889 A. D.), in a village called Penuganchiprolu in the Nandigama Taluk of the Kistna District. He came of a Velnati Vaidiki Brahmin family, of Haritasa Gotra, with the trio of Haritasa, Ambarisha and Yavvanasya—all of Kshatriya stock—as his Rishis. His father, Kodandaramaswamy, was a school-master of modest means; his mother, Sitamma, died on the third day of giving birth to this, her only, child. The father married a second wife soon after, but himself died when Gopalakrishna was barely three years old. Thus Gopalakrishna was orphaned at a very early age and his guardianship passed on to his paternal uncle, Mr. Sivaramayya, and his grandmother, who was a familiar figure in the Gopalakrishna gallery. And under the mothering care, particularly of this aged lady who lived on to an advanced age of eighty, till 1922, Gopalakrishna spent his infancy and early childhood in Kuchinapudi and Guntur where he had his paternal properties.

The period 1889 to 1911 in the life of Gopalakrishna was more or less one of uneventful childhood and play. It was the period of the silent growth of the boy, under the loving care of his grandmother, and of his early frolics and studies. He was brought to Guntur, where they had a small garden-house, and was put to school there; and though, even very early, he was quick of grasp, retentive of memory, and very intelligent, he does not seem to have been good at all in his application to studies. On the other hand, he took a special delight in learning

folk-lore songs and epic poetry which his grandmother had taught him : and his special avocation in those days was his extra-school activity, which included going out on excursions, frequenting theatres, and himself taking to the stage. In his school, he came as far as the Matriculation, where, owing to his wayward ways, he got plucked twice ; and thereupon was sent to Bapatla, where, it was thought, he would devote himself more conscientiously to his studies in a new atmosphere. Gopalakrishna, no doubt, fulfilled the expectations of his uncle in respect of his studies, and got through the Matric the same year ; but he also picked up very soon new friends in that place, and in 1907, they started a theatre, called the 'National Theatre.' After he passed his examination, he joined as a clerk in the Taluk Office at the same place, and while in this capacity, he is said to have written a famous letter to his guardian, telling him that it was better to beg in open streets than to serve as a clerk in a Government office. Accordingly, he resigned his post and joined the college at Guntur for higher studies. He, however, left this also very soon and joined the local Mission School, as a teacher, which too he left shortly afterwards, and proceeded to England in 1911, to prosecute higher studies.

There is an interesting incident relating to this period, which throws considerable light on Gopalakrishna's latter-day views on money and economics. It appears, he was asked by his uncle to submit monthly accounts for scrutiny. Even in those days, Gopalakrishna was not only free of purse, but also bad at accountancy. The result was that, in his monthly returns, he often forgot an item here or would incur an expenditure there which his uncle might object to. The young ward, therefore, would omit such items ; and write instead "imposition" against the sum thus spent. The entry was once or twice taken for the name of a book or so by the uncle who was ignorant of English ; but when the "imposition" repeated itself, month after month, the uncle found it out, and thereafter he never more insisted on accounts. This particular trait in his character illustrates the tendency of a mind, which, at a maturer age, developed into a philosophy of the "elimination of money,"

that is, as a prime motive of life, "from the governance of our institutions."

There is evidence to show that young Gopalakrishna was deeply affected by the political events of the first decade of this century. The 'Vande Mataram' or Swadeshi movement from Bengal was then sweeping across the length and breadth of the country, and it had its echo also in Guntur and other districts of Andhradesa. Gopalakrishna appears to have been frequenting those political meetings and listening to and even delivering speeches on politics and nationalism. In 1907, he was already planning at Bapatla of a 'National Theatre' and a 'National Fund' for educating the people on "all our political affairs." In 1909, he is said to have delivered some lectures on nationalism and art at the Second Andhra Students' Conference held at Bandar (Masulipatam). And about this time, he also led excursions of fellow students to places like Kondaveedu Fort, the seat of the Reddi rulers of Andhra. All these must have kindled a strong love of liberty in him; and there is no doubt that the movement of 1907-1908 left a strong impress on his mind.

Among the figures that stood out prominently in his mind from out of the leaders of the time must be mentioned the late Lokamanya Tilak and Sree Aurobindo Ghosh. The release of the Lokamanya from the Mandalay jail in 1915, Gopalakrishna celebrated with great éclat when he was Secretary of the Edinburgh Indian Association; and after the Gandhian "Backing at Bardoli" in 1922, he was often saying: "Oh, for a Tilak or Das by the side of Gandhiji" at Bardoli! Of Sree Aurobindo, the Saint of Pondicherry, Gopalakrishna wrote in his *Sadhana* in 1925: "The great Reserve of Hope of India, .. the prophet of nationalism, poet of patriotism and lover of humanity."

Among the Andhra patriots, the figure that attracted young Gopalakrishna most at this time was one, Jonnavittula Gurusadham, the ardent publicist and thinker of Guntur, who, in company with a few friends, first founded the Andhra Movement. The late Gurusadham was both the brain and soul of the Movement which followed in the wake

of the Swadeshi Movement of Bengal, and was its constructive counterpart. His politics were verging on the side of moderation of the Gokhale type; and young Gopalakrishna, however much he admired Gurunadham's talents and enthusiasm, could not agree temperamentally with his school of thought, so much so that he was often joking that they would get Swaraj or Home Rule by tapping the box which contained his (Gurunadham's) papers. Gurunadham, in his own way, was forerunner of Gopalakrishnayya in our Andhra politics; and he too shared, in his day, the crown of suffering and martyrdom which fell to the lot of Gopalakrishna subsequently, and died in his thirties.

But great as was the impression made by the Movement of 1907-1908 on the formative mind of young Gopalakrishna, it is doubtful if he ever subscribed whole-heartedly to the main tenets of the "Vande Mataram" or Salutation to the Mother cult of the Bengali school. In England, the country is looked upon as 'Motherland'; in Germany, as the 'Fatherland'; but in India, among the ruling classes, at any rate, she has ever been the wife and never the mother. During the early years of the present century, whether owing to the feebleness of our political effort or consciousness or in imitation of the traditions of our ruling masters, a cult of worshipping the country as 'Mother' arose in the land, and "Vande Mataram" has been our battle-cry since the days of Rishi Bankimchandra. Gopalakrishna, however, received this *Mantra* coolly; and at a later age, himself suggested that "a true apprehension of the abiding relation of a political worker towards his country" should be that "of a lover towards his beloved." Thus, he declared: "Vande Mataram," the helpless cry of the child, has been till yesterday the limit of our emotional achievement in this behalf.....But it is time that a correct understanding of the true relationship with our environment should begin in all our national efforts. The earth may be the mother of him who is passive and lacking in self-confidence, but to him in whom the urge towards action is irresistible, he is the Lord and she is the Spouse, *Bhu-pathi*

he is, and not *Bhuputra* or *Bharata-Putra*. Indian language is there to correct us, but no one noticed it yet...

*Ekaiva Bhaginee Loke, Sarveshaam eva Bhu-Bhujaah,
Nabhojya Nakaragraahyaah, Vipra-dattaa Vasundharaah !*

“To all the politically-minded, there can be no sisters but one, viz., the land that is gifted to the *Vipra* or Brahmin. That alone is unenjoyable, untouchable. The suggestion is that everything else stands related as wife, to the statesman or leader.... Everything else is subject to the directions of the statesman.”
(*Sadhana*, I. p. 3.)

His inborn genius for reviving the pristine glories of our religion does not seem to have awakened to a full consciousness at this early age, though the elements of a future outburst are, indeed, there, visible to a closer gaze. His first acquaintance with our religion was through Sanskrit learning and devotional song and epic. In 1898, he was admitted, by one, Bharatula Mrutyunjaya Avadhanulu garu, to the “Spiritual path,” through *Upanayanam*, or the initiation ceremony; but it is doubtful whether the significance of the ceremony and of the ‘Sacred Thread’ had been realised by the young initiate, though, it is remarkable how tenaciously he clung on, in his later life, to the importance and sacredness of *Upanayanam*, which he designated as ‘Our National Education’, and how he attached the highest significance for *Brahmopadesam* or the initiative *Mantra*, which was the formula for the conversion of all into his neo-Brahminical order. Gopalakrishna was married in 1903 before he was barely fourteen, the bride being a girl-relative of his, belonging to his neighbouring village. The father of the bride was a pious Brahmin, who used to recite regularly *Bharata Savitri* and *Gajendra Moksham* every night. The wife—her name is Durga Bhavani Amma—was quite a simple and ordinary country girl; and in later years, she served him—all honour for her devotion and reverence for her services in those terrible years of Gopalakrishna’s subsequent suffering—very devotedly during a major part of her husband’s career, and with infinite powers of endurance and toil. She suffered, first, on account of his long absence in England; next

through his indifference and even cruelty for sometime after his return to India; then because of poverty and other vicissitudes of her husband's political career; and lastly, owing to his long and protracted illness, which meant to her a most trying ordeal, indeed, in her solitary seclusion with her husband. But the husband was noble; and the wife was brave; so the couple pulled on; and she now mothers their only son, Chiranjeevi Ramachandramurthy.

The main result of this period was that it took the mind of young Gopalakrishna from the realm of a merely bookish school education which he did not very much care for, to the great school of life, which included the theatre, drama, art, folk-lore, song, politics, marriage, society, in all of which he revelled, as in a play, and gradually he expanded his horizon, and thus prepared fully to graduate himself in the bigger University of life to which he soon resorted in a pretty adventurous manner.

CHAPTER II

STAY IN BRITAIN (1911—16)

We now reach the period of his stay in England, or rather in Britain, for, the major part of this period was spent in Scotland—Edinburgh—rather than in England. He stayed there for nearly five years in all, and came home only once during that period. The adventurous trip to the West was fruitful of the most interesting and important results.

It is not difficult to divine with what motive he proceeded to Europe. It was a fashion, in those days, to proceed to a British University to pursue one's higher studies; and partly it must have been due to his characteristic love of adventure which was a passion right through his life. Partly he must have got disgusted also with the dry-as-dust sort of life which he was

forced to lead as a petty employee at Bapatla or Guntur ; and partly, too, the desire to win a degree—perchance to become a Barrister!—and thereby eke out a decent livelihood must have been a dominant motive.

Gopalakrishna decided on going out in company with a few friends, among whom he was the guiding spirit.

The manner of their starting was a particularly secret affair ; for, in those days, there was still a lingering prejudice against foreign travel ; and moreover, the financial aspect of the scheme was dependent on one, Sri N. V. L. Narasimha Rao, and any the least inkling was sure to be resented by Mr. Rao's guardians, who would nip it in the bud. But such was the dexterity and resourcefulness of Gopalakrishna that they had successfully evaded the most vigorous searches made by the people of Mr. Rao, and the latter could learn of the departure of the boys, only after their steamer had left the Bombay harbour.

It is well-known that, in the one ostensible purpose of his stay in Scotland, viz., his studies in the Edinburgh University, Gopalakrishna was not particularly diligent or earnest. It is said that he missed many a lecture ; was indifferent to his professors ; and was ignorant of many text-books. Naturally, he was unlucky in his examinations, though wherever he could use his original talent, he had shone like a star. But he was not the sort of man for the modern systems of "large-scale educational factories"—of the "congregational type" as he himself used to call them—and they were not the things for him. He was always of opinion that these 'educational systems' are so many 'soulless organisations.' It is remarkable with what consistency he suffered for his educational faiths, all along rejecting the pretensions of these organised colleges and universities to judge the accomplishments of individual souls. Throughout his life he stood for the recognition of the individual type in our educational methods ; and when one examines his entire career, one wonders not that he missed to take a degree twice, but as to how, in the end, he managed to secure one. "Mine is not a utilitarian conscience," he wrote, "and I wouldn't distress myself too much if a speculation worth

Rs. 11,000 has failed to procure at least one degree. I know what I got in return for this Rs. 11,000. It is incommensurable and invaluable too."

At the University, he appears to have picked up some knowledge in economics, in which he ultimately got an M. A. (Honours). But it is curious that he hated this branch of human knowledge most profoundly; and, throughout his life, he never spared the subject. Economics which now rules the world, according to Gopalakrishna, is the science of destruction, and the mad pursuit of the world after its thought and action indicates an imminent crash of human institutions. Culture, according to him, ends where economics begins. "The study of economics is characteristic of the modern age. Mankind after living upon this earth for centuries, without finding any need for it so long, has at last arrived at a stage when it cannot do without it. Economics nowadays tops the list on the educational menu of every 'civilized' country."* "Money!—This money vitiates the real life of humanity, but yet it is hailed as the honey of humanity. *Gott strafe money!*" "Elimination of money from the governance of our institutions is a cardinal creed of Ramnagar." The great ideal which he held before himself was doubtless the Rule of the Spirit, that is, of God, where the world is befogged and threatened with extinction by "a positive Godless philosophy, industrial anarchy, and spiritual famine." "Economics deals with wealth. Wealth invests all things with utilities and renders them capable of being appropriated or consumed... Consumption decrees death to all things, a change of name and form. When mankind find themselves in an economic mood—as we are now—it is destruction of all things that is ordained. It is *Laya*. *Layakarta* is Rudra. That is why we find the world in the vortex of a big conflagration

*Thus, while, in every age, the Book meant the *Veda*, or the *Zend Avesta*, the *Sayings of Confucius* or the *Shinto*, the *Dhammapada* or the *Bible*, *Koran* or the *Grandh Saheb*, in the modern age, the Book has come to mean the Account-book or the Ledger, vide the Science of Book-keeping. And that is probably why England, a "Nation of Shop-keepers", rules the world.

Rs. 11,000 has failed to procure at least one degree. I know what I got in return for this Rs. 11,000. It is incommensurable and invaluable too."

At the University, he appears to have picked up some knowledge in economics, in which he ultimately got an M. A. (Honours). But it is curious that he hated this branch of human knowledge most profoundly; and, throughout his life, he never spared the subject. Economics which now rules the world, according to Gopalakrishna, is the science of destruction, and the mad pursuit of the world after its thought and action indicates an imminent crash of human institutions. Culture, according to him, ends where economics begins. "The study of economics is characteristic of the modern age. Mankind after living upon this earth for centuries, without finding any need for it so long, has at last arrived at a stage when it cannot do without it. Economics nowadays tops the list on the educational menu of every 'civilized' country."* "Money!—This money vitiates the real life of humanity, but yet it is hailed as the honey of humanity. *Gott strafe money!*" "Elimination of money from the governance of our institutions is a cardinal creed of Ramnagar." The great ideal which he held before himself was doubtless the Rule of the Spirit, that is, of God, where the world is befogged and threatened with extinction by "a positive Godless philosophy, industrial anarchy, and spiritual famine." "Economics deals with wealth. Wealth invests all things with utilities and renders them capable of being appropriated or consumed... Consumption decrees death to all things, a change of name and form. When mankind find themselves in an economic mood—as we are now—it is destruction of all things that is ordained. It is *Laya*. Layakarta is Rudra. That is why we find the world in the vortex of a big conflagration

*Thus, while, in every age, the Book meant the *Veda*, or the *Zend Avesta*, the *Sayings of Confucius* or the *Shinto*, the *Dhammapada* or the *Bible*, *Koran* or the *Grandh Saheb*, in the modern age, the Book has come to mean the Account-book or the Ledger, vide the Science of Book-keeping. And that is probably why England, a "Nation of Shop-keepers", rules the world.

now." "Rudra is the presiding deity (*Adhishtana Devata*) of economics, the Third in the Hindu Trinity." (His Trial Statements)

Gopalakrishna also went through a course of physiology and medicine, in which also he received a diploma. But that branch of knowledge too was of little attraction to his maturer mind, and it is noteworthy that, wherever possible, he rejected the claims for superiority of the Allopathic systems over the purely Indian system of Ayurveda. And, as we shall see later on, though he was gladly an inpatient in a British hospital in 1915, ten years later, he would not so much as even enter an Allopathic hospital in India for the treatment of his fell disease, to which he succumbed in the end.

But if his studies at college were not of much consequence, his stay in Britian was of significance in several respects. That he got his degree, in the end, was perhaps nothing, after all. But what is more important, here he became acquainted with the great life of the Western peoples, here he met his friend, Miss Christel Semisch, of Berlin, whose affiance, time, space and even death have not been able to efface; and here he met his *Guru*, Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

Writing in June 1915 to a friend, he said: "The Dean of the Faculty of Arts has refused to admit me to the examination on the ground of the Public Law not being completed...This circumstance, I thought, was the culmination of a series of mishaps and misfortunes which my follies and inexperience have successively precipitated during the not very enviable sojourn of mine in this country. But one thing I assure myself. I have determined to persist, and, surely, I can't do otherwise...Disappointments, humiliations and even disgraces, whose prospective occurrence is deeply concerned in the course of one's own actions according to the normal valuation in normal conditions of life, are now to be entirely ignored in my case, in view of the exclusive character of my ideals and aspirations contrary to the general run, in view also of my especial peculiarities in my incapacities and capacities alike,...differentiating them from those observable ordinarily in men." "Even at the risk of

being misunderstood, I cannot but claim a different standard for the valuation of my work and achievement. If it cannot dazzle the expectant eyes of my people, it has at least given me the satisfaction of knowing more life and its possibilities than I know: and this is, after all, the more enduring, the more vitally essential, part of one's achievement."

His coming into contact with Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, while he was in England, was an event of first-rate importance in Gopalakrishna's life. It was at an annual meeting of the Edinburgh Indian Association, in December 1914, that they first met. At the end of the function, Gopalakrishna, as the Organising Secretary, had to say *Thanks* to the guests which he seems to have done in a neat speech, which attracted the great artist. They met subsequently by appointment and gradually there arose a steady correspondence between the two; and finally the great Doctor drew young 'Gopala' to his hermitage at Britford, near Salisbury. Gopalakrishna stayed with Dr. Coomaraswamy in all for four months and some days; and this is how he himself described and estimated the value of this stay:

"I sought to place myself under Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, in whom the idealism of the East and the intense practicalism of the West are harmoniously blended. After all, *Acharyavan Purusho Vedah*, they say: it is only through a *Guru* that one can obtain the true variety of culture... I offered to be a *Sishya* to Dr. A. Coomaraswamy, which he was delighted to accept... And I came here to Salisbury and am staying in his house. The house is three miles from Salisbury town. It is a country-seat. How beautiful this is! He is a saintly man and his wife (Ratnadevi) and family (a little boy three years old, his name is Narada, and a baby girl, name is Rohini) are so kindly to me. Their house is truly the abode of peace and happiness. He has a huge library and works incessantly. He takes our relation (of *Guru* and *Sishya*) too seriously and seems to think of hammering all knowledge into my poor brains. I like everything here so well, so quiet, so beautiful and so heavenly. There is a small garden around our house. The climate is very warm. There are no houses around within two miles



As undergraduate at Edinburgh

from here; and for every little thing, we have to go to Salisbury, three miles from here. Of course the servants in the house bring all things. There are two servants. Everything is very nice, but one thing is wanting, i.e., money...All day, I am working in his library or in my room, and in the evening we all sit together, have some music or discussion. It is all so beautiful. I am supposed to give them 30 sh. a week...Dr. Coomaraswamy works so incessantly, so regularly, and is making me follow his ways, though, I must confess, that I am feeling this rather hard, but yet I feel sure I will get better shortly. Fancy, getting up at 6 o' clock regularly (for one accustomed to get up anywhere between 10 and 11 o' clock) and working so regularly and going to bed at 10 o' clock in the night. It is also so quiet all-round. I must say, I am enjoying this life most, though, when I come to do work, I am feeling a bit hard." (Letter to N. V. L. dated 23-6-1965.) "The four months and odd I stayed with Dr. Coomaraswamy," he wrote on 15-12-1915, "is, in a sense, the best part of my life as yet lived. I think the stay has profoundly altered my view and knowledge of life. Both physically and mentally, I am now entirely a new man. Blessed be the happy moment which inspired me to live with him, which has brought about this great metamorphosis in me."

It will be interesting to recall how the great Doctor himself had reciprocated these exciting feelings of his brilliant pupil. In his first letter, immediately after their meeting at Edinburgh, addressing Gopalakrishna as "Gopalakrishnaraya", Dr. Coomaraswamy wrote on 11-12-1914: "Very many thanks for your kind welcome. We look forward to seeing you before long. Be sure to come." There were several more letters, asking him to come to Britford; and on 8-4-1915, he wrote: "I hope you have not abandoned the idea of coming down South." Then, in his letter dated 23-4-1915, "If you are able to visit us at the latter part of May, that will suit us very well. Also the weather will be very fine...I am sorry to have made a mistake in your name. I was thinking of the Kings of Hampi." "I have never written any poetry," he tells his

young friend: "but when you come here, I can show you a number of books you might find it interesting to look up... This is very pleasant country, two miles from Salisbury. But it is not so wild and picturesque as Scotland; shall I hope you will like it? Do bring the 'tablas' if you can. Here are the names of a few books...Birdwoods' 'Swa', 12/6 (This is quite a good book—Pro-Brahman) etc."

Dr. Coomaraswamy undoubtedly gave an effective turn to the fertile genius of young Gopalakrishna, and he supplied him with a good deal of knowledge on Indian art, literature, culture and philosophy, and thus accustomed 'Gopala' to a new discipline and opened up to him vistas of new life and thought, and not only trained him as his 'Sishya' but soon made him his co-worker and assistant. The teacher and pupil gradually began collaborating at reviews on Rajput painting, Ajanta frescoes, *Abhinaya Darpanam* (Mirror of Gesture) etc. In his letter dated 29-10-1915, the Doctor wrote to 'Gopala': "I very much hope we shall have the opportunity to work together again sooner or later, for your assistance would be a great advantage to me. Perhaps I shall some day be able to afford it, but at present could not think of it." In his final letter from New York, dated 10-7-1916, the Doctor subscribed: "Believe me to remain your friend and *Guru*, as long as you so wish it."

The disciple faithfully kept up his studentship even after their parting; and in his only letter from India, dated...January 1925, Gopalakrishnayya alludes to his communion through silence, with his "Esteemed Gururji", and begged him for an *Asiroachanam* and an occasional contribution to his newly-started journal, *Sadhana*. In the same letter, he told his *Guru* about his own story thus:

"Vicissitudes almost transcendental and abyssmal as well tried their luck with my soul. Meanwhile, I remain, however, as you may expect me, a trifle for or near thereto. All the time, would you care to believe it! I not only never forgot you, but you were ever gracing the front bench in the Goshti of my soul. During the period, we were ever in communica-

tion—through silence, of course —“ *Mauna vyakhya prakatitha parabrahma thathwam.*” I ever dig from the response of silence enough light to illumine my path.”

And speaking of himself, he wrote: “To put my story briefly, ever since I returned from England (it is eight years now), excepting for a brief period of a year, during which I was in Government service as a Professor in a college, I have been in national service, in some form or other, enjoying all its gifts of poverty and penury. I had also my go to that flat globe—the jail—for a year. I have constructed a tiny little village called Ramnagar near the famous town Chirala (whose exodus and exile of a long twelve month, by the way, constitutes one of the most exciting and important episodes in the Non-co-operation Campaign). Leaving the Lord, I am yet the only inhabitant of the village. I live there with my wife and child. By the way, again, I lost two children and I have now a boy, just fourteen months old. This is all my little family, and some day I hope to gather in a few more wise souls into my Goshthi, whose *Peetham* I propose to establish there some day. Sreemad Andhra Vidya Peetha Goshthi (something like Aristotelian Society) has been my ambition. I started this some five years back; but as yet, there are very few members, five or six, as they must be from the Andhras (Telugus) alone; and a weekly journal of ‘National Idealism’, a phrase peculiarly your own, which I intended to start so long ago, could only make its appearance very recently, a few weeks back, owing to the storms and cyclones of Non-co-operation unnerving us from doing anything.”

It is said that Gopalakrishnayya’s first introduction to Gandhiji was through the words of his *Guru*. Thus, while Gandhiji was on a visit to England in 1915, Dr. Coomaraswamy took his young *Sishya* to London and, on their way, he described the Indian leader as “the coming man of your country.” And in 1920, when Gopalakrishnayya decided to throw in his lot with the national current, no wonder that he chose Gandhiji for his leadership and proclaimed him an *Avatar*!

CHAPTER III

EARLY ASPIRATIONS

It will be useful at this stage to refer to some of the aspirations of Gopalakrishnayya at this early period of his career. And the sources of information for the same are essentially three. One of them is a letter of Gopalakrishna to his uncle when he was at Bapatla in 1907. The second is his letter to another uncle, from Scotland, dated 8-4-1914. And the third was a small notebook which is a store-house of much useful and interesting information regarding his early hopes and aspirations; and it was dated probably just at the time of his return from Europe (1916), or shortly afterwards.

In his first letter from Bapatla, he tells his guardian: "The National Theatre has been started after I came to this town. Its chief object is, first, to secure its necessary equipment; and then, with its proceeds, to build up a fund, called the National Fund, to run a free night school for the labourers who will receive education on our current-day political affairs etc. Among our members, eight are Matriculates who passed their examination last year; six are clerks in the Munsiff's Court; five are employed in the Taluk Office; and all the twenty are educated people. Mr. Tangirala Anjaneyulu is its President... To be an actor in a drama is really an act of self-sacrifice, because the great truths of our scriptures are a sealed book to our illiterate masses; and in a drama, those truths can be revealed to them by cultured and self-sacrificing people. It, therefore, gives both worldly and heavenly bliss (to join a dramatic society). Some bad people, however, have corrupted these great traditions of the stage and have themselves turned into vagabonds. Do

not think that I who am fit to be worldly-wise will give up my job for the sake of these theatres." (Translated)

It should perhaps be added here that he had both resigned his 'job'—which was a clerkship at that time in the Taluk Office; and subsequently turned a "vagabond" also, though his was a sort of 'intellectual vagabondage' as he himself used to call it. It is also to be noted that his ideas on our modern Indian art and drama have undergone a radical change; and he actually used to say that in this country, at present, there is no *Kala* (Art) except *Pretakala* and no *Natyam* other than *Smasana Natyam* (Dance of death.)

In his letter from Scotland, dated 8-4-1914, he wrote to his uncle thus: "About my future career. Roughly, I have set the following courses to myself. (1) Educational: That is, accepting any teachership anywhere, provided it is amply remunerative and has tolerable leisure and higher degree of liberty. (2) Journalistic: That is, starting a journal with an auxiliary of a first-grade pleadership. (3) Active participation in public life by joining the Servants of India Society. Government employment is out of question. Under no circumstances would I go in for it. I have very strong views on this. And whatever course of these three I adopt, I shall devote my leisure to history, economics and politics. This is the whole programme of my future life if God grants me health, energy, and life."

A few comments on this passage will be necessary. Gopalakrishna accepted teachership, both in a Government College and in the National College at Masulipatam; but he had to leave both after a brief stay. He started a journal — *Sadhana* — but that too was short-lived. The Servants of India Society in his mature age became an object of compassion, if not of ridicule for him—for, he declared subsequently that every volunteer was at least a 'Servant of India!' He had not much leisure in his later life, no health, and died at thirty-nine.

But it is the third source of information that is of perennial interest. The notebook contains mere jottings and scribblings,

partly in English and partly in Telugu. It is a profoundly interesting document and the following extracts, it is hoped, will be relevant for this study. It will be seen that most of them are in the nature of practical directions for his own conduct, and some of them reveal his views and aspirations in that youthful period when he had just returned from Europe. The Indianity which is transparent in almost every line and word of these notes shows how least he was effected in his essential outlook and aspiration by his five years' stay in Britain. Possibly, not a little of this was due to his own *Guru* Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy with whom he had lived for sometime just previously.

And here are some of its contents. Among the list of articles to purchase, there were the Violin and Thambura; Krishnainam and Devatarchana; Sanskrit-English Dictionary and "Principles of Tantra", and all works of Samuel Butler etc.

Among the places to visit were, the Gandharva Maha Vidyalayam at Lahore; the ancient Observatory at Ujjain; and Malabar for studying its social customs.

Among his plans for the future were, the writing of prose dramas and encouragement of our men and women to act on the stage; to collect pictures of art, and to reconstruct the world map; to organise an All-India Students' Sabha with Hindi as the medium; to deliver a grand lecture with Prof. Arthur Geddes in the chair, on 'Indian Students in England' for the benefit of the Edinburgh Indian Association, to have an Andhra Educational Conference and open national schools in all the district centres; to write a book on the New Buddha and on Buddhism, to start an anti-Missionary Society in India, to write the stories of Masthan Saheb and Lakshmanaswamy (brother of Sree Rama); and to translate European thought for the benefit of our Pandits.

There were directions for the use of Kondapalle (handmade) paper and కందుకాయ ink. There are Latin names for ఎలకాశ (Elacocarpus Gavitrus), *Thulasi* (Ocimum Sanctum) and *Darbhabu* (Pva Cynosuroides).

“Attempt Andhra Short-hand and have a book of verses,” he wrote. “Let Andhra meetings be held at holy places and on festival days, so that all people are brought in contact and religion will be wedded to *Dharma*.” “Move a resolution in the Congress for recognition of the principle of reorganisation of provinces on a federal basis.”

Here are a few curses of India: (1) Railways, Telegraphs etc. (2) Hospitals, Doctors etc. (3) Museums; (4) Public Libraries; (5) Schools, Colleges and Universities; (6) Missionaries; (7) Congresses and Conferences; (8) Factories; (9) Famines and Pestilences.

“The true history of India is from Infinite to Infinite. The Dynasty of Brahman rules the land, undisputed, absolute. The ego and the world are impostors and they are engaged in an eternal conflict, where the impostors have an eternal defeat.”

“All beings run a race to Brahman. Some have a start earlier; others later. Some have great speed; others are slow. Therefore, education is a contrivance to accelerate the speed and make up the lost time.”

“War-dance”, he wrote, “is the artistic counter-part of modern manouvres.”

(*Goshthi*, Vol. I. pp. 60-64)

CHAPTER IV

IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE (1917-1918)

We have seen, in the second chapter, that Gopalakrishna's stay in Britain for a period of five years at a very important and formative period of his life enlarged his mental horizon; broadened his range of outlook; deepened the source of love; and increased his thirst for freedom. In respect of this last, the free atmosphere of the freedom-loving countries of the West was a great incentive to the buoyant enthusiasm of young Gopalakrishna; and the war which broke out while he was still in Europe (1914-'18) further spurred his mind to dreams of freedom for his own great, but unfortunate country. The coming 'Fight for Freedom' in India was thus a common topic among his friends in Edinburgh; and the 'gentlemen's agreement' amongst those young dreamers was that, if they should find each other on the field, "You will spare me my life, and I will spare you yours!"

But it was not towards political freedom that Gopalakrishna turned soon after his return to India; and his first attempts were for securing a job in Government service. He appears to have originally planned for some business career; but somehow it fell through; and, in the summer of 1917, he went to Ootacamund, the summer-seat of the Madras Government, and met there Sir Alexander Cardew (Member for Revenue) and Mr. Stone, Director of Public Instruction. After the usual exchange of greetings and some chit-chat, Sir Alexander seems to have enquired whether Gopalakrishna was a Brahmin or a Non-Brahmin. When he replied that he was a Brahmin, Sir Alexander began to laugh. At this, Gopalakrishna felt hurt and at once rose up to go, whereupon

Sir Alexander apologised and said that he meant no offence to him or to his fellow-Brahmins; the Government really wanted Brahmins; and the Non-Brahmin question was merely a political move.

Gopalakrishna's visit to Ooty in the summer of 1917 was also significant in that he met there the Andhra leader, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who was to prove thereafter his formidable political rival and opponent. Their first meeting is said to have been not a very cordial one. And Gopalakrishna seems to have created the impression of being a too independent sort of fellow, in the mind of the Doctor, though he must have been impressed also by the great talents of this new and rising genius of Andhra. Though he could not secure a job in the department of Sir Alexander himself, yet the latter got for him, through the Director of Public Instruction, a job in the Madras Educational Service. And in July 1917, G. K. Duggirala was duly installed a Professor of History and Economics in the Government Training College at Rajahmundry.

Gopalakrishna was in Government service for nine months barely—from July 1917 to March 1918; but those nine months were eventful enough. He began his professional career under exceptionally favourable auspices. For he was young enough, yet none too young, being twenty-seven; he had seen and known much of life, both Eastern and Western; unlike most others of the teaching profession, he was not a book-worm; and he had all the qualifications of a teacher, such as love, sympathy, knowledge, humour, eloquence, originality, taste, a genial temperament and rich inner resources. He was buoyant in spirit and enthusiastic of method; was conscious of his culture; for instance, to illustrate how the most abstruse modern theories had been successfully grasped and assimilated by our average people, he quoted how the Einsteinean 'Seventh Dimension' was incorporated long ago into our consciousness in a famous verse of the *Sandhya*, wherein the seven directions of our spatial order are mentioned by name and pointed at by every boy, and that the 'seventh sense' which is such a hard nut to

crack in modern science is a matter of clear grasp by every child in India. At the same time, he was not bigoted or narrow-minded; his service in a place where his own language is the spoken tongue gave him opportunities for illustrating and even experimenting upon some of his ideas of education; and, above all, his office gave him a chance to live, because his salary of Rs. 200 per month, though not wholly sufficient for his needs, was the most that he ever got in his life, and further, there were good chances for promotion in due course.

Gopalakrishnayya's stay at Rajahmundry was of lasting significance to the public life of Andhra at least in one respect, viz., of reviving the *Burra Katha*. Because, for teaching Andhra History to his students, he would get a party of Jangams and make them give a performance of either *Bobbili Katha* or *Palnati Katha*. His idea was that History was not a mere chronicle of events. It is these folk songs that not only narrate the events of those bygone times, but rouse our emotions of sympathy, appreciation, patriotism etc., through sound and song, music and drum. A class that would have been otherwise dull and insipid was thus enlivened, and the characters of the bygone times were brought back to re-live their experiences and enable the students to imbibe their spirit and live with them so to say. Apart from its value as 'a method of teaching History', it stands to the credit of Gopalakrishnayya to have contributed in no small measure for the revival of this *Burra Katha* as a living feature of every popular form of activity in the province, and nowadays, there is no political party which does not maintain a *Burra Katha* troupe for propagating its tenets.

But at the same time, there were two or three circumstances which, in the long run, had conspired to oust him from this happy position in life, before he was barely nine months at his post.

First of all, in this part of the world, the times were then out of joint; and, in the college, as indeed everywhere all-round, things were topsy-turvy. For at least seven hundred years India had been a slave-land; and this long slavery has all but effaced our indigenous ideals and culture, while the existence of a Western,

foreign Government tainted our methods and even motives. As a result, during the first half of the present century, India had a sort of education which is not even permissible, not to speak of its possibility, in any other country in the world. Thus, in our colleges and universities, education was not only State-designed, State-controlled and State-directed and officialised, aiming at the perpetuation of the alien culture and ideals ; but also, and for that reason, has been more or less imitatory of Western institutions at their worst, though not in their best aspects. And if an inspired professor like Duggirala chanced to enter the portals of teaching, it is no wonder that his soul felt cramped within the system ; and ere long, even the Department of Public Instruction found 'no need' for continuing his services.

Secondly, there were the inevitable jealousies and rivalries of his fellow professors and the wounded pride and race-superiority of the European Principals on the one hand, and the inexperienced and unbalanced spirit of self-assertion of Gopalakrishna on the other, which, in a short time, came to grips and made the young professor quit the college altogether. The European Principals of the two Government colleges in Rajahmundry, in particular, felt dwarfed and eclipsed by the rise of this new star in their firmament ; and, if proof was needed, the students of the Arts College chose for the presidentship of their Metcalfe Hostel Anniversary the young professor Duggirala, in preference to the mighty Ross of superior race !

Mr. Ross, the Principal of his college was probably hurt that he should have beside him a 'native' youth, outshining all his glory ; and he began worrying Duggirala with this minor discipline and that Gopalakrishna was not keeping his punctual attendance ; that he was not confining himself to the prescribed lecture-hours or courses, that he was breeding indiscipline among students ; and so forth. Consequently, there arose a good deal of hot blood between the principal and the professor, and here is a characteristic reprimand from the former.

"Dear Mr. Duggirala,

Let it be understood clearly that you have work here every day from 9-45 A. M. to 12-30, and 2 to 4-30 P. M. If you stay away

between these periods, you will have to apply for leave. Kindly send me a report of your Conference Address, as Government require it.

Sincerely yours,
(Sd.) R. W. Ross
10-1-1918

But the equally proud professor, unmindful of such orders, would go late as usual; the irritated Principal got the doors of the college closed against him; and Gopalakrishnayya climbed up the college gate to the great annoyance of the Principal and merriment of the students!

The culmination came with two meetings which were *not* political, really speaking; but which savoured of politics. In 1917, the Government of Lord Pentland passed the famous G. O. 555, which prohibited students from attending political meetings. A meeting of the students of Andhradesa was held at Masulipatam to protest against the G. O., and Gopalakrishna very nearly attended that meeting and addressed the students *in an adjoining room*. Again, as President of the Metcalfe Hostel anniversary at Rajahmundry, he harboured a small 'National Flag,'—Red and Green were the Home Rule colours in those days—which was a gift of some enthusiastic youngster, and the President placed it on his table. And this "disloyal" act of Duggirala seems to have been taken to the notice of the Government who asked for a report of his address. But as the address was delivered extempore, no copy was available; and this added—in the Principal's imagination—as a deliberate insult to the already wounded pride of an Englishman's vanity; and down came the order that the Government *no longer needed the services of* Mr. G. K. Duggirala.

This, no doubt, was a sad turning in the life of Gopalakrishna. For it threw him out of employ once more, and this time without a chance of re-admission into any Government service, which was the most paying and secure in the land. And secondly, it cut him off—the real teacher that he was—from the most prolific source of cultural comraderie, viz., the

young and virgin student-world of the land. Finally, it brought to a sudden and premature end the many educational reforms which he was beginning to entertain in his bosom, and thereafter, he had once more to face an arid world, with a searching look of 'Where? Oh! Where?'

But whence is that siren voice, beckoning him to come, and posing itself as a 'national call'? For the authorities of the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala at Masulipatam, notwithstanding the protests of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, as soon as they knew of the unemployment of Duggirala, offered him their hospitality and invited him to join their institution, as its Vice-Principal. And it seemed as though Gopalakrishna had really left the ghost of a Government service to embark on a new and real life,—of free education and national culture, of noble ideals and a purer, freer, and more indigenous atmosphere.

CHAPTER V

AT THE JATEEYA KALASALA

From Rajahmundry, Gopalakrishnayya proceeded to Masulipatam and joined the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala, as its Vice-Principal.

This Kalasala or the National College as it was popularly called, was a Techno-literary High School, founded in the wake of the Swadeshi movement of 1906-08, of which national education was an integral part. To understand the significance of the movement, one should travel back a little, historically-speaking.

Thus, by about 1830, the British in India had completed their territorial conquests and acquisitions and then began their work of consolidation, for which Western education in our schools and colleges became a vital plank. From the time of the Minute of Lord Macaulay on Education, there was a deliberate attempt

at turning the minds of our youth from its native moorings and to impart to them an education based on Western traditions, customs, and ideals, and even the indigenous languages were completely uprooted. And in the beginning of the present century, Lord Curzon, as Viceroy of India, completed this work by officialising the universities. And the national movement in India took up this position and sought to redress it by starting 'national' schools and colleges, where the spirit of patriotism would prevail, indigenous languages would receive proper attention, and where some craft or art would be taught compulsorily to supplement the mere bookish learning of the governmental institutions. And the Jateeya Kalasala was a product of this movement in the Andhra districts at that time.

The founder of the Kalasala was the late Kopalle Hanumantha Rao, a brilliant young man; and like Gopalakrishnayya, was an M. A. and a B. L. too to boot. It is said that he tore off his Law Sanad lest he should be disturbed from his school work. He worked heart and soul for the institution, and did much to make it a success. In these efforts, the late Hanumantha Rao was ably assisted by two of the foremost Andhras of the day, Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Sree Mutnuri Krishna Rao of *Krishna Patrika* fame, both of Masulipatam. And the three formed an illustrious trio, from which emanated the many currents of our public life of the time in this part of the country.

Gopalakrishnayya stayed at Masulipatam in all for eight or nine months only; and the following details of his entry into and exit from the Kalasala will be of importance for a study of his story.

At the time of his joining the institution, as its Vice-Principal, it appears, Gopalakrishnayya was offered three terms, viz., (1) a remuneration of Rs. 100 per month; (2) a so-called "reference in space" or provision for a house of his own; and (3) the headship of an *Arya Sikshanalayamu* at a place called Tadepalli near Vijayawada, where the Kalasala had some lands, and where Gopalakrishnayya would be free to experiment with his educational ideals which were deemed as too revolutionary even for an institution like the Jateeya Kalasala. But soon

misunderstandings arose between the management of the college and Duggirala ; and eventually, the latter was forced to quit the college and seek his own way in life. But during his stay at Masulipatam, he endeared himself most to his students, as will be seen from their Farewell Address to their beloved Vice-Principal, reading thus : “ Your stay with us has been brief but eventful enough, to leave indelible marks of your noble soul, untainted character, and impressive personality on the student population of this place. You have brought with you the morning glow of National education, and sung to our ears the depth and charm of Indian art.....We shall miss, with great regret, the sweet melody of your music, the lucid originality of your thought, and the sterling sincerity of your utterance.” (Address from the Students’ Progressive Union.)

Gopalakrishnayya’s demand for a house to live in seems a bit queer from the view point of current practice ; but judged from the essentially human standards, it has a more than passing interest. Thus, in his letter to the Principal dated April 1918, he wrote : “ I should be provided with a habitation which I could call my own. This is a thing which I need most. I must have some point of reference in space.” And it is remarkable how tenaciously he clung to this principle throughout his life. At Chirala, it will be observed, he raised a virtual revolt against the Government, because it prohibited him from entering a land which had been granted to him previously. And at Guntur, just a few weeks before his death, he purchased a site and built a cottage for his dying ! Thus, a house for every householder, or a *Griham* for a *Grihasta*, was a *sine qua non* with him ; and it is a sign of the times perhaps that it is now becoming a “ fundamental right ” with our people.

But the greatest contribution of Gopalakrishnayya during his stay at Masulipatam was in the form of certain extra-curricular lectures on the four human pursuits — *Purushaardhamulu* — which he delivered to a group of admiring learners. The notes of

these lectures, faithfully preserved by two of his pupils, contain his views on many subjects, such as the ideals of man, psychology of man and woman, education, qualifications of a *Guru* etc. It is a profoundly interesting treatise, and has been published after his death in book form, in Telugu.

CHAPTER VI

PLUNGE INTO LIFE STARTING OF THE VIDYA PEETHA GOSHTI

After leaving Masulipatam, Gopalakrishnayya went to Kuchinapudi and Guntur for some months, and he made his first appearance before the public at the Mahanandi Andhra Conference of 1920. Mahanandi is an important place of pilgrimage in Andhradesa, being famous for its temple of Siva and His great Nandi or Bull, and is situated in the midst of the most gorgeous scenery, surrounded by dense woods and wild forests all round. And out of that scene, Gopalakrishna emerged in an unique fashion, of which here is a description from his Telugu biographer.

“Casting aside all vestiges of Western civilization, adopting the style of our ancient pandits, wearing a bare under-cloth and an upper one over his shoulders, with a garland of beads on his neck, like the incarnation of the three-eyed Siva, having a big, red, caste mark in the middle of his broad forehead, discoursing on the duties of the Aryan race with friends, Gopalakrishnayya came to the pulpit, and in a firm and resonant voice, with sweet intonation and spontaneous clarity, quoting gems from our classical scriptures and interpreting them in word as well as by gesture and action, he revealed to the modern mind steeped in ‘civilized’ barbarity and despicable atheism, born of an alien and outlandish tradition, the duties, nature and forms of Andhra Idealism, and inspired them to



As Prof. G. K. Duggirala

Dharma or the spiritual high path." (Translated from Sri B. V. Appa Rao's "Chapters on the Andhra Ratna.")

Gopalakrishna's presence at Mahanandi impressed its deliberations profoundly, and he was now the leader of a band of young men, with a distinct gospel of "National Idealism" of his own, and with a definite aspiration to build up a school of life in the country. And so far as the conference was concerned, it was a case of "He came, he saw, he conquered." So much so that his influence soon became an object of envy and jealousy among his Masulipatam adversaries who began to revile him as a country-boor, nicknaming him as 'Sunkara Kondaya.' The humourist that Gopalakrishna was, he took advantage of this derision and proclaimed himself as the incarnation of Lord Sankara, reborn in the woods of Mahanandi, in the garb of 'Sunkara Kondaya,' to put down the evil prattlings of those Bandar pretenders! Apart from the repartee, in the context of his main mission and message, the idea of his being a re-incarnation of Sankara sounds, indeed, as unique.

Gopalakrishna's activities at the Conference centred round two directions, viz., political extremism and national education.

Politically speaking, Gopalakrishnayya was responsible at Mahanandi for turning the course of Andhra politics from a dilatory path of halting moderation—into which they had fallen for long years,—to a deliberate resolve of active Non-co-operation with the Government. At that time, the political situation in the country was briefly thus:

There were the Punjab massacres, where nearly 2,000 men, women and children were caged in the Jallianwalabagh and brutally done to death; and following them, there was a reign of terror and repression on one side and a bitter and determined agitation on the other. The Government were unbending in their attitude, and in their unrepentant mood, were thrusting a Scheme of Reforms* which were pronounced to be "unsatisfac-

*The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, culminating in the Government of India Act, 1919.

tory, inadequate and disappointing" by the National Congress and other public bodies, to herald which the Prince of Wales was about to be landed in India. Our people, therefore, were then considering their attitude, firstly, about the political reforms, and secondly, the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, both of which were impending. And in both of them, Gopalakrishna ranged himself on the side of an upright nationalism and was virtually responsible for the Non-co-operation Resolution against the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and also for the boycott of the Prince's visit in that Andhra Conference, which was perhaps the first of its kind in India to do so.

Gopalakrishnayya was equally responsible for a resolution appointing a committee of eminent educationists, with himself as convener, to examine our ancient educational ideals and methods and to draft a scheme of education on our traditional lines. He himself had been revolving the Goshti idea in his mind at this time; and after leaving the conference, he pursued it with the result that he prepared the draft of a scheme which is perhaps his greatest contribution to the Andhra people, and it was only to give an outer expression to these ideals that he eventually started the Vidya Peetha Goshti at Chirala-Perala.

This is the formal and prosaic part of the story of the starting of the Goshti. But there is a more interesting and human part behind it, which culminated in its emergence.

For, immediately after leaving Masulipatam, Gopalakrishnayya was faced with a quest in his life again for a 'reference in space,' that is, for a place to settle down and live. And he pitched upon Chirala for the purpose, as it satisfied the double object of serving his grand educational ideal which had now completely possessed his mind, and of being situated in a beauteous and healthy locality, bordering the sea. In fact, he went to Chirala for the treatment of his wife, who was at that time keeping indifferent health. His original idea was to acquire a spot on the sea-shore itself, near Vadarevu three miles from Chirala, for the purpose of his University. But

it was distant from the town; there was no road at that time connecting the two; and for several other reasons, he thought that he might first have a place nearer the town and nearer civilization, at the same time being sufficiently removed from its evils. He chose a spot, a mile from Chirala town; and with that as his base, he hoped ultimately to realise his grander dream nearer the sea at some future time. This grander dream never came about; though even as late as January 1927, he was telling his friends, from astrological calculations, that he would be responsible for the building of a Brahma's Temple on the Vadarevu sea-shore, and with that as a nucleus, that he would found a grand Brahminical Religion for the whole world.

Having chosen the place, Gopalakrishnayya approached the Divisional Magistrate of Ongole for a grant of land. The Magistrate, the late Sir S. V. Ramamurty, who was a highly cultured gentleman, sympathised with Gopalakrishnayya's aspirations and encouraged him to get together a few friends and form an educational association and register it under the Indian Societies Act, when he would be able to consider the grant. Gopalakrishnayya took up the idea, formed the Sreemat Andhra Vidya Peetha Goshti and got it registered on the 22nd July 1920, and in due course, got a grant of 58 acres of land for the society and one acre for himself in the Ipurupalem village, adjoining Perala. Formal orders were received; and a day or two later, he had to translate a speech of Mahatma Gandhi at Bezwada, for doing which the Government immediately, i.e., within four days of passing the original orders, sent another order, whereby Gopalakrishnayya was prohibited from entering the land "until further orders."

Gopalakrishnayya now felt like an infuriated lion whose prey had been snatched off from its very mouth, or better still, as an outraged lover whose beloved had been cut off from him just on the eve of consummation. The part played by him in this mood in the Chirala-Perala campaign is a matter of history, but so far as the Goshti is concerned, in lieu of the forbidden ground, he got the present Ramnagar land of about nineteen acres from five persons of Perala, with whom he was at this

time very popular. And here, he gathered three or four young men, some of whom followed him from the Jateeya Kalasala, collected a little money, and began to formulate a scheme of work which was purely educational and cultural. They wanted to start a press also, called the Satyanarayana Press, and purchased a machine. He declared himself as Editor and Publisher of two weekly papers entitled the *Sadhana*, one in English and one in Telugu, and one of the members published a national calendar or *Panchangam*. The scheme which was rapidly drawn up was being assimilated by the Goshti members for starting a school at an early date, and the higher courses of study were being thrashed out by Gopalakrishna himself. Thus everything was ready, when the non-co-operation wave of Indian politics swept over the land and the Goshti was all but lost in its storms, and it was not till Gopalakrishnayya's return from exile, both governmental and congressional, towards the middle of 1925, that the Goshti could once more revive its existence even in name.

Before going to trace the subsequent stages in the chequered history of the Goshti, it is better to refer briefly to the Goshti scheme, as conceived by its author.

The *Constitutional* part of the Goshti is in the form of certain rules and regulations of the society, as submitted to the Registrar according to the requirements of the Act. And a brief resume of the same is as below :

The *name* of the association shall be 'Sreemat Andhra Vidya Peetha Goshti' or simply the 'Goshti.' Its *objects* shall be: (i) to provide for the education of our children on traditional lines by the creation of a cultural centre in Andhradesa, in the form of a *Vidya Peetham* or University. (ii) For the spread of culture, to create, in every district in Andhra, as many of such Ashrams as possible, affiliated to the central *Vidya Peetham*. (iii) To take all such steps as would conduce to the spread of healthy education and righteous living among the people of Andhradesa.

Elsewhere he defined the objects of the Goshti in the following words. "The Goshti aims, amongst others, at organising Andhra life to come in line with the great National movement

that is afoot in the country. A clear and correct enunciation of National Idealism is to precede the actual establishment, under its auspices, of a genuine *Vidya Peetham* (University) which shall present a constant critique of the movement of Andhra life and thought. The need of the hour, however, is a rigorous valuation of alien ideas and forms of life that are gathering thick around us. And unless a co-ordination of our experience, a synthesis of all our activities and a correct line of conduct that steers clear of all superstition and unreason are laid down and a living idea with all modern form and movement facilitated, we stand the risk of the abiding individuality of our race deteriorating and our capacity for self-expression disappearing. A constant examination of our current social, religious and economic life is to be undertaken and guided to move in consonance with our traditional modes of self-adjustment. To afford facilities for the nascent Andhra genius and talent to give its fullest love and sacrifice to the nation is yet another desideratum. ”

There shall be three classes of *members*: (i) Pandits or Life members who serve the institution for at least ten years; (ii) patrons; and (iii) students or sadhakas. Subsequently, he wrote that “we shall have only participants and no patrons.”

The *management* of the society shall vest in (a) a Managing Board and (b) the *Vichaaranakarta* or Secretary. The Secretary shall also be the Chairman of the Managing Committee and shall administer all the affairs of the Goshti. The Managing Committee shall be elected once a year; the Secretary shall hold office for five years, being eligible for re-election.

The *Vidya Peetham* or University shall be the principal working department of the Goshti. The *Peetham* shall have a President if unanimously elected by the Goshti members. If there is none so elected, i.e., unanimously, the place shall be kept vacant. He shall hold office for six years, being re-eligible for election.

Local ashrams or colleges affiliated to the University shall be managed by local managing committees, which shall be entitled to send a representative each to the Central Managing Board.

The Goshti members shall be free to follow their avocations in life not detrimental to the welfare of the Goshti; and the Goshti shall not, in any way, interfere with such earnings of its members.

The Goshti shall meet at least twice a year; and its proceedings shall be published annually.

II. The *Constructional* part of the scheme was to provide, among others, for the following: For an *Ashramam*, the following five are most important: (1) Temple (school); (2) press; (3) guest-house or *chatram*; (4) lodgings or *gramakantham*; and (5) land for cultivation.

The land required shall be about 132 acres, thus:

(a) For habitation:

1. Temple (with a tank, school and library attached.)	5 acres
2. Office and printing press	2 „
3. Guest-house	5 „
4. Habitation for 10 families.	20 „
Total	32 „

(b) For cultivation: at least 100 „

Total 132 acres

The whole to cost at Rs. 100 per acre about Rs. 15,000 approximately; and the press, preliminary expenses and buildings to cost another Rs. 15,000. Total estimated cost, Rs. 30,000.

Everybody shall get his initial outlay for the expenses.

A few general directions are appended as below:

1. Settle the locality to be acquired.
2. Try to obtain the minimum outlay by all sorts of honourable means.
3. Settle down; and
4. Begin work.

III. The *Cultural* part of the Goshti is perhaps the greatest contribution of Gopalakrishnayya to the solution of Andhra, nay Indian, thought and life; and it is available in Telugu in the only manuscript copy which he left, and deals with the fundamental

aspect of our educational ideals, under the three heads of elementary, secondary and collegiate. The scheme is of the highest importance to our educational experts and is reproduced in the next chapter.

The later story of the Goshti is briefly told. After its premature suspension in 1921, when it also gave a welcome reception to Mahatma Gandhi and presented him with an address in Telugu, written on palm leaf and besmeared with turmeric paste, the Goshti had a nominal revival in 1923.

In November 1924, on his re-arrival at Ramnagar, he had an idea of reviving the Goshti ; and the following are a few extracts from his correspondence at the time relative to this Goshti-idea : "The foundation ceremony of the two temples (Shiva and Vishnu) has been fixed for the 5th of March (later changed to 7th). Thus will our Vidya Peetha Goshti come into existence... Ours is not an institution which is to save or swarajise a nation. Nor is it the offspring of the Gandhian era and ethic or theology. It has been existing since pre-Gandhian times, though so far in my dreams and the sands of Ramnagar. It is only now that I am vouchsafed freedom to devote myself to it. And I am determined to do it at all costs and even with no cost. And you will notice that mine is too curious a method for the modern to feel comfortable at the thing. Fancy idols are to be the first denizens of the village and the first members of the Goshti ! But so they are whosoever notwithstanding, where I am concerned...Idol is the concretised ideal." (Letter to G. V. S., dated 19-2-1925.)

"Why not we spend a few days of every month together in a conference of comparative experience ? Or why not, every weekend ? Every Saturday and Sunday at Ramnagar ! A capital proposal and a salutary one, what do you say to that ? It would at least be Pickwickian, if not Aristotelian. We shall have a few more. They must be quite mobile and need not be very rich but in their tastes. We shall have only participants and no patrons. We shall even record the transactions of this group of go-aheads. And that is Goshti right enough !... Workers who have made up their minds to be so despite

disabilities, dearths and despondencies, make capital company during such gatherings..." (*Ibid*, dated 13-4-1925).

"For Goshti, the nearest Sunday this side or that to full-moon is the day every month. Of course we meet only once a month. I don't propose more than five members to start with...The type of a member should be one as would (i) reach or have reached certain levels in thought and emotion; (ii) pledge or have pledged one's self to serve a commensurate ideal in life and (iii) be free to dispose of one's self about in life...We shall have no cynics...Earnest young men make capital members of the Goshti. Fat-pursed and high-browed are to be cautiously admitted." (Letter to G. V. S., dated 21-6-1925.)

"I have always felt the Goshti should spin itself round the temple. Religion was its motif. The Goshti Library was conceived to be a part—*Mantapam*—of the temple. It was never a nationalistic venture, as such, though, if it could have lived, it would have been of much national service. The species of culture that was to fill it and was to be dynamic of response and growth was intended to be what is now generally called 'Hindu culture.' Nationalistic colour tends to eliminate the religious motif, which is vital for every genuine Goshti. 'H. S.' and such other people may easily drag it into the library movement, or the educational or any philanthropic one...The Goshti was never intended to 'serve a public purpose' in the current, common, democratic sense of the term...Doers of public good, as such, are not of much consequence for it or for any abiding cultural Goshti."

The following circular, with a draft of the Goshti objects and methods in Telugu, was dictated by Gopalakrishnayya on 8-5-1927, and was intended for circulation among two dozen likely persons.

"The Goshti Day is intended as a day of dissociation from current actions, when we try to think about our life and examine its dispositions, current and coming, and hit upon a fundamental formula and shape our lives accordingly.

“To form a private Goshti to help each other and develop a certain relationship which rises above caste and above everything else in pursuit of reality, meeting once a month, at Ramnagar.

“To try to evolve, on the whole, a new order of life or religion, absolutely unostentatiously, and to immediately practise (undertake) living up to it.

“That is to say, every meeting must account for realities in our life. We may enlighten each other and publish proceedings, but without any names.

“Something like a Free Masonary, or the Aristotelian Society. — genuine comradeship and genuine life—not many members; and no question of votes, elections or democracy. Only try to be and adopt the unanimous.

“Think a thousand times before you give your consent.”

The objects and methods of the *Brahmana Goshti**—which was the name evolved for his new conception—were dictated by him in Telugu, and translated, read thus :

“Arya,

We † desire to establish a *Brahmana Goshti* with the following objects and methods. Believing as we do that you are a good Brahmin (*Brahmanottama*) fit to be its member and pursue your life accordingly, we venture to send you this appeal with a request that you might kindly join it as a member. And we pray for your acceptance.

“The Goshti meets at Ramnagar every month, on the Sunday nearest to Pournami. It is intended that every member should reach Ramnagar that morning; accept the hospitality of one of the members for the whole day; discuss the Goshti affairs and return home next day. As soon as your acceptance is made known, we shall intimate to you about its first meeting.

*The Telugu version is given out at the end of the book, as an appendix.

† The circular letter was to have gone in the names of the Andhraratna and the author.

of our education; the Aurobindian outbursts of the first decade of the present century, resulting in the establishment of the Council of National Education in Calcutta; the mild agitation of the Home Rule Movement; and the Gandhian Non-co-operation of the twenties which urged a complete boycott of British schools and colleges in India. Thus, Western education, during the century since its inception, had not gone unchallenged, though, like the classical Saraswathi, the Indian current had to remain underground for the time being.

The movement of 1907-10 in India was not a supplanting system in the sense that it did not aim at rooting out the alien method completely. National education in those days meant an attempt at vernacularisation and imparting some technical courses, in contrast to the merely "bookish" education which sought to make us into a nation of clerks and civil servants, plus a great deal of patriotism, of course. The Andhra Jateeya Kalasala of Masulipatam was a product of this school; but, when Gopalakrishnayya joined it, he had his own doubts whether that was the type of education which would satisfy the soul of India; and by the time he left it in 1918, he was convinced that a more radical reform was needed for the purpose.

Among our recent thinkers, it was left to a few persons only to have had the privilege of diving deep into this subject; and more or less on the lines indicated by Swami Vivekananda earlier, it was the good fortune of the Andhraratna to have drawn up, for his Vidya Peetha Goshti, an outline scheme of education, which, in view of its importance, is reprinted below:

NATIONAL EDUCATION — A DRAFT SCHEME

The education of a child can be divided into three stages, viz., *Balasiksha* (or Elementary); *Pedda Balasiksha* (or Secondary); and *Vidwat* (or Collegiate.)

CURRICULA

The *elementary* stage runs to three years. At the commencement, the student should be taught the "*Panchaakshari*" or some other *mantra* according to the tradition of the boy.

The curriculum includes : (a) *Sabda siddhi* or pronunciation ; (b) memorisation ; (c) *Jyothisha* or elementary astrology ; (d) history and geography ; (e) science ; (f) art ; and (g) sports.

Of these, *Sabda siddhi* covers the teaching of the five periods of letters in Sanskrit and Telugu ; composition of letters ; compilation of words and sentences ; reading and writing.

Under memorisation, the boys should get by heart such books like 'Sumati Satakam,' 'Dasaradhi Satakam,' 'Bala Ramayanam,' Vemana's Verses, 'Andhranamasangrahamu,' 'Rukmini Kalyanam,' 'Gajendra Moksham,' 'Dandakamulu,' reading of the 'Maha Bharata' and 'Bhagavatam,' and recitation of the *Sandhya* mantras with proper *Swara*.

The course under *Jyotisha* includes a knowledge of the years, months, weeks and days, planets, rasis etc., and the 'Pancha angas'. In elementary mathematics, they should be taught the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division ; market calculations ; multiplication tables ; mental arithmetic ; weights and measures etc.

The course under History and Geography includes the teaching of the *Ramayana*, *Maha Bharata* and the eighteen puranas in story form. Tales of heroes and great men and of glorious campaigns—e. g., of Dharma Raja, Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Nelson, Hindenburg, Shivaji, Khadga Thikkana, Hyder Ali etc., and of prophets like Sree Krishna, the Buddha, Christ, Mohammad, Nanak, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Confucius, Zarathushtra etc., of present day heroes and national leaders ; and of heroines and pathivratas should be taught. And these should be taught in a pauranic form.

Similarly under Geography, a knowledge of the *Pancha Bhutas* or the five elements—of the earth, water, fire, air and ether—and their component parts should be imparted. Thus, under earth : mountains, valleys, plains, plateaus, islands, peninsulas, isthmuses, deserts, forests and habitations. Under water : the seas, lakes, rivers, straits, waterfalls, springs, glaciers etc. Under air : tempests, cyclones, cool breezes, north winds, rainfall, steam,

and men of letters will be engaged in such peaceful pursuits. Such people do not like much of *Kaaram* (hot chilly); eat moderately; are indifferent to sundry stuffs; are fond of fruits and roots; and have a distaste for prohibited articles (like onions etc.). In their demeanour, they imbibe discipline spontaneously; are unostentatious and orthodox in their dress and frugal in speech; and are self-sacrificing generally. They sleep moderately, wake up in time and avoid sleep during the day, of their own accord. And the *Upaasana* for such boys should be *Prasanna* devatas like Saraswathi, Sita Rama, Lakshmi Narayana, Gouri Shankara and the like.

Those inclined towards the *Sringaara*, *Veera*, *Karuna*, *Haasya*, and *Raudra* rasas will be admitted into the *Rajo Gana*. Those engaged in warfare, and administration, music, literature and dancing, amusements, sculpture etc., will be fit for admission into this class. In food, they like delicious dishes; indulge in sundry eating; are punctilious about their food and take to drink and meat. In their conduct, they imbibe discipline through training; are proud and showy in dress; are talkative in speech; take delight in games and sports, oaths and fights; exhibit great courage and valour; are free in giving; and kind to the needy. They sleep immoderately and are fond of *Bhoga* (luxuries.) Kodanda Rama, Nataraja and Krishna will be the proper *Upaasana* gods for such pupils.

Those who are inclined to the *Sringaara*, *Haasya*, *Raudra*, *Beebhatcha* and *Bhayaanaka* rasas will be entitled to join the *Thamo Gana*. Those engaged in the manufacture of arms, agriculture, trade, cattle-rearing, smithy, carpentry, weaving, pottery etc., will be fit for this class. Such people drink freely; eat meat; are quarrelsome and dependent on others; sleep moderately, and are undesirous of *Bhoga*. Kaali, Narasimha, Mahishasuramardani etc., are fit forms for their adoration.

Those who are yet undeveloped for any of the above three ganas will be admitted into the a *Misra Gana*. Though they are 'unspecified' in the beginning, they may be evolved through *Saadhana* for admission into one of the above ganas. Servants,

toddy-drawers, potters, barbers, washermen and shoe-makers will be included in this class. Drink and meat, immoderate and indiscriminate eating, servility, daring, fear, cruelty, selfishness etc., mark their conduct. They sleep like wild cats, and are free from *Bhoga*. Lower devatas, serpent, and scorpion mantras etc., are their objects of worship.

It will be wrong to import any difference of the high or the low into this classification, for by so doing, we will be acting contrary to the *Gita* doctrine of *swadharma*. Difference in class indicates but a difference in methods and naught else. In each individual, these three qualities will be inherent. As one of them predominates, it indicates one's inclination in life. For those who are preponderatingly *Saattwik*, the *Jnaana marga*; *Bhakti* for the *Raajasik* variety; and *Karma* for the *Thaamasik* are to be adopted.

In the *Secondary stage*, there will be four *srenies*, covering four years. Therefore, the number of boys in each *gana* will be forty.

But in the *Collegiate* course, the *gana* and *sreni* classification is not to be applied. And a separate college or *ashrama* for each special branch of knowledge is recommended. And as their heads will have attained complete mastery over all the *ganas*, classification of students will not offer any difficulties at this stage.

(Translated from the original Telugu draft.)

The above is but a bare outline of the scheme which Gopalakrishnayya desired to introduce and develop through his *Vidya Peetham*. But unfortunately, that was not to be. It may, however, be useful to sum up some of his other views on the subject which will be of interest to our educationists in the country.

In one word, it may be said that Gopalakrishnayya was all in favour of the traditional *Gurukula* method of teaching, where the teacher and the taught would be *antevasis*, that is, the dwellers within, in the same household. Accordingly, he hated the present day congregational systems, with all their concomitant curricula, buildings, lectures, examinations and so forth.

To him, the teacher or *Guru* was an all important factor ; and without a real *Guru*, all schools are but mechanical contrivances. The *Guru* should be a man of extraordinary qualities, abilities and realisation. "Every one cannot be a teacher," he wrote "He who takes his job to be of transcendental importance alone can be allowed to touch my boy's soul though his teaching may not go beyond reading and writing."

A pupil is the embodiment of a body, life, mind and soul. As such, his *Sikshana* must be a process of moulding it in a perfect manifestation in all his four sheathes or *koshas*.

Every pupil has a distinct individuality. As such, the *Guru* should take into account the various individuations of his *sishtyas* and should reveal himself to every one of them, like Sree Krishna to the Gopis in His *Rasa Leela*. The system of prescribing the same courses for all types of students is altogether wrong.

Students are not to be grouped into classes according to the information to be gained or imparted ; nor are they to be handled by different teachers for the different subjects in the higher classes especially. The correct criterion would be to divide them according to their *gunas* and *karmas*, that is, inner qualities and outer actions. And pupils of one *guna* are to be trained by one having a perfect mastery in that particular *guna*.

The aim of education should be neither good character nor citizenship, neither bread and butter nor knowledge for knowledge sake. It should be "to make every one a genius."

Gopalakrishnayya's methods of teaching differed widely from the current ones. He was a confirmed iconoclast in regard to modern history, economics, epigraphy, library and the museum habits. And instead, he was in favour of installing the temple, scripture, epic and the purana, mythology and folk-lore, ballad and song were his favourite sources of inspiration and study.

Recitation or religious reading and writing were to him more important than mere literary studies. And the book, according

to him, must be an object of worship. This book, it should be added, meant not only the *Veda*, but the *Bible*, *Quran* and the *Grandh Saheb* also.

But religion is not a mere "imposture, superstition or slaughter." For reason, indeed, "is the prophet of the new age."

A *Guru* is entitled to his *Dakshina*. But a monthly salary reduces him to the level of a wage-earner.

And his teaching "certainly includes 'reading and writing,' (and God-willing, reading realities and writing) destinies" also.

CHAPTER VIII

CHIRALA-PERALA : ITS CAUSES

With the story of the Goshti being told, an epoch in Gopalakrishnayya's life has been reached; and it is in a different light that we will have to view him hereafter, as the "Hero of Chirala-Perala," for apart from his *aspirations*, it constitutes the greatest *achievement* of his political career, nay, the most heroic incident of the entire non-co-operation movement in India, for as S. Sreenivasa Iyengar once put it, as between Gandhiji's Bardoli and Gopalakrishnayya's Chirala-Perala, "the former was more fortunate."

The causes of the struggle are briefly told :

To be fair to its opponents, let us first state the version of those who were opposed to the campaign. Thus speaking on a motion in the Madras Legislative Council,* on 17-11-1921, proposing the abolition of the municipality and its replacement by suitable unions, the late 'Diwan Bahadur' E. C. Ethirajulu

*The resolution was moved by Sri C. V. Venkata Ramana Ayyangar of Coimbatore and seconded by Mr. P. Venkata Subbarao of Ongole.

Naidu, the foremost opponent of Gopalakrishnayya in the Guntur District, said :

“Chirala is a sanitarium : It is a favourite resort of officers, both European and Indian, for purposes of recreation and also for sport. The area of the town is two square miles, and the population, according to the current year's census, is 15,326. It is the centre of weaving and dyeing industries on a large scale. The merchants here have direct dealings with those at Ahmedabad, Bombay and Calcutta and import large consignments of English yarn and piece-goods from Manchester. The cloth manufactured here is exported to Rangoon, Singapore, Hyderabad and other distant places. Besides, it is the chief source of supply of cloth and other commodities to almost all the other important towns in the district. It will thus be seen that the trade activity here is generally intense. Hence, in common parlance, the town has got the appellation of ‘Second Bombay’.

“Chirala was a Union for about forty years ; and during this period, it had to depend on other local boards for financial support. Its receipts were low, being only Rs. 5,252-15-1, and had to maintain a hospital at an average cost of Rs. 7,150 each year. In the year 1914, a Deputy Sanitary Commissioner inspected the town, found it awfully congested and seriously lacking in sanitary requirements, and predicted that, if it was not made a municipality soon, some serious epidemic would break out and cause devastation. Accordingly, in 1917 and 1918, there were outbreaks of plague which resulted in serious loss of life. It was after the visitation of plague that the then Union Chairman proposed the constitution of Chirala into a municipality. The proposal was approved by the Taluk Board and the District Board. Though, at the beginning, there was some resistance on the part of the people, as is generally the case in all newly constituted municipalities, they got reconciled to the situation, participated in the municipal affairs in right earnest, and paid the taxes for the first half-year without any hitch. In the course of the second half-year, they fell a prey to an avowed non-co-operator and political agitator, by name Mr. Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya, got themselves enraptured by his stirring and fiery speeches,

and in the long run, imbibed the principles of non-co-operation which launched them into lawlessness and revolt. Actuated by feelings of disaffection towards the Government, these people wanted to throttle the Municipality and establish a 'Swaraj Union'. To this end, they took recourse to the weapon of social boycott to the extreme point possible, and persuaded the councillors to resign their seats on the Council. This was followed by the supersession of the Council and the appointment of a Special Officer. A week after the Council was superseded. Mr. Gandhi also visited the place. He told the people that the appointment of an Official Chairman, meant violence; and in order to gain their end, he advised them to have recourse to non-co-operation; and if they were diffident of carrying out the campaign without the least violence, they should take to the alternate method of evacuation. The leaders then hit upon desertion and enforced it much against the will of the indigent by holding out the threat that the paid Chairman would distraint all their properties if they stuck to their abodes any longer; by distributing relief money, by exercising social boycott, and by defiling wells. As a result of all this, about thirteen thousand of the population are living outside the town, some in sheds three miles off towards Ipurupalem, some close to the town beyond municipal limits towards Jandrapet, and others in the surrounding villages of Vetapalem, Bapatla etc. The fight is, after all, political and not economic, as represented by the leaders. Since the 1st of April 1921, an amount of Rs. 5,309-15-6 has been collected (as taxes). The total demand of the Municipality for last year was roughly Rs. 29,000. Chirala is a fit place for a municipality. Its conversion into one or more permanent unions is, I submit, an undesirable setback to progress. Besides, it will serve as a bad precedent and bring ruin to other municipalities which have begun to totter. It is not due to the self-determination of the people but to others' determination over the will of this townsmen, that such an impasse was brought about. It is a tirade against the popular Ministry who are in no way responsible for the introduction of the Municipality into

this town. In these circumstances, Mr. President, I oppose this resolution very strongly."

The Rajah Saheb of Panagal, Chief Minister as well as Minister of Local Administration, while welcoming the opportunity to place before the House the Government view point "regarding the unfortunate state of affairs at Chirala", charged the non-co-operators with taking advantage of the situation and entering into an unholy alliance with the wealthy merchants of Chirala and bringing about that "regrettable state of affairs." After referring to the history of the municipality, he said: "The Municipality worked well for nearly a year. But after the advent of the so-called non-violent non-co-operation movement, troubles began. These non-co-operators went about the town preaching that medical relief, education, sanitation etc., were all tainted, because they had been initiated by the Government—the Government itself being 'Satanic' * in nature. They advised the people of Chirala that they should not have these measures." The Minister then referred to the complete paralysis of municipal administration at Chirala, and regarding the exodus, he said: "No doubt, people suffer by living in sheds. I sympathise with them in their sufferings. But the Government are not responsible for the suffering."

Gandhiji, on the other hand, wrote in his *Young India*: "Chirala-Perala is, in fact, one village, not far from the sea, with a nice climate, and containing a compact population of about 15,000. The Government has been endeavouring to impose a municipality on the people who protested against the measure. Let us see what the municipality meant to the people: certainly not better sanitation, for the place was unusually well kept by the people themselves; certainly not more education, for the people were non-co-operators. It meant more taxation, more interference with their liberty. This was an intolerable evil for the people."

It is a pity, indeed, that a complete and detailed story of this glorious campaign of those days is yet to be compiled, because,

*Gandhiji used this word at that time to describe the then British Government in India.

on the one hand, the then British Government and the Justice Party which was allied with them treated Chirala-Perala and its leader as their enemies ; and the Congress, on the other, had always treated the movement with a step-sisterly, if not—motherly affection. Thus Gandhiji himself told Gopalakrishnayya that the Congress would not share any responsibility for his movement ; and actually, the Congress historian, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, wrote that “Chirala-Perala was outside the Congress.” But still an attempt has got to be made to describe it here at least in a bare outline and explain its significance.

What is this Chirala-Perala ? Briefly, it was a revolt, on the part of its people, against the Government of the day, in the form of an organised resistance against an imposed municipality, and Gopalakrishnayya was its acknowledged leader. The prosaic part of its story is thus :

Long before Gopalakrishnayya's entry into the scene, and even before his arrival in Chirala, there were attempts to establish a municipality in this area, comprising the four villages of Chirala, Perala, Jandrapeta and Veeraraghavapeta ; and there were protests against the proposal. But the Government persisted ; and while the people submitted helplessly in the beginning, the voices of protest did not die down ; on the other hand, when the spirit of revolt was roused in the country through the non-co-operation movement, the local municipal stream emptied itself into the mighty national current, and when there descended on the scene a capable and picturesque leader in Gopalakrishnayya, there was a flare up.

The rest of the story is briefly told. At first, the people passed resolutions protesting against the Municipality. When the Government paid a deaf ear to them, all the elected councillors resigned enbloc. Government then appointed a paid Chairman to collect taxes and run the show. But the people decided upon non-payment of taxes, and the authorities tried to collect them forcibly. Properties were attached and put to auction. But, strangely, there were no bidders, even when they were taken to distant places like Bapatla and Guntur. A dozen brave persons

including an aged woman — the first in all-India to go to jail for a public cause — were imprisoned for their refusal to pay. And they cheerfully suffered the penalty and were duly honoured by the people. When repression began, Gandhiji advised an evacuation of the town, so as to avoid a direct conflict between the Government and the people and also to allow the municipality to die out of inanition. The advice was accepted, and there followed an exodus of all the inhabitants to places outside the municipal limits which is unheard of in recent history. The leader was then removed from the scene by incarceration in jail, but the people did not yield, in spite of Governmental threats, cajolings and even repression. Six months later, Gandhiji withdrew his non-co-operation movement from the whole country. After some more waiting and suffering, the people gradually decided to go back to their homes and the movement collapsed even before Gopalakrishnayya returned from jail in October, 1922, and the Municipality began to function once again, till it was abolished altogether by Dr. B. Gopala Reddy, during the First Congress Ministry, in 1938. Such is the formal part of its story. But its real significance lay far deeper.

First and foremost, it was a struggle of the village versus town. To understand its significance, it is necessary to remember that, unlike the Western countries, India is essentially a rural country, with nearly 90 per cent of its population living in villages, and our entire life, culture and administration based on the village unit. This fact at once gives us the secret of our organisation in this vast land of 500 million souls, of various races, religions, castes, communities, languages etc., and also accounts for the great success with which our life and administration have been carried on from times immemorial. The alien British Government, ever since their coming over here, have done everything in their power to destroy these age-old village systems and to replace them by urban municipalities and townships based on their own boroughs. The destruction of our ancient village-life, coupled with an attempt, more pronounced of late, to set up urban Boards and Municipalities in our bigger villages and towns, constitutes the main policy of the British administration during the two

centuries of their rule in India. The Municipality, with its limited powers and vote-begging methods, inert constitution and internecine feuds, declared the Andhraratna, was a hybrid, "born out of the unholy alliance of the *Abrahmana* and the *Angleya*", that is, of the Justice Party and the British Government; and it is no wonder that, in his attempt to restart this Nation on its path of Swaraj and *Swadharma*, Gopalakrishnayya began with an effort to resist this move of urbanisation and to build up, in its place, a Panchayat administration to rule over its destinies. Thus, in his Trichinopoly speech, he declared: "During the eleven months there was no Municipality in Chirala, they had their own committees ruling. To organise self-government in a village which consisted of so many communities, they had to keep aside democracy lest it should degenerate into mobocracy. In Chirala, they had thirty communities, each being represented on the committee."

Secondly, as has already been said, Chirala-Perala was a battle-royal against the then existing alien Government in India. For it may be recalled that, at this time, the Congress politics had assumed an aggressive turn and the country was ranged in a non-violent struggle with the bureaucracy, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Reference has been made already to the Punjab massacres, Montague reforms and the Mahanandi Mahasabha. The Calcutta Special Congress which met in September 1920, under the presidentship of Lala Lajapati Rai, accepted a resolution of non-co-operation with the existing Government; and Gopalakrishnayya, it would appear, had seconded that resolution. The Nagpur Congress which met in December of the same year reaffirmed the resolution and went a step further and laid down a programme of action "for establishing Swaraj in India within the year of grace 1921." When it is remembered that that programme was inspired and led by one whom his *Gurujī*, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, had commended as "the coming man of your country", and whom Gopalakrishnayya himself, at this time, declared "a seer, creator, a leader of mankind,...so acknowledged or about to be acknowledged"—it will be realised how he could not help throwing himself heart and soul into this movement.

This last—"so acknowledged or about to be acknowledged"—gives us the clue at once to his headlong rush into the struggle and eventually, to the tragic failure of the movement and the crash of his own career. Thus, at this time, his assertions of the "Avatarhood" of Gandhiji—that he was a Vamanamurty, with the Punjab, Khilafat and Swaraj as the "three steps" to send the mighty Britisher—Bali Raja—down to the *Patala Loka*; and from a hundred platforms, he acclaimed that here was their *Mantra-Drashta* or Seer of Reality and *Jagat-Srashta* or Creator of the World, nay, the coming Kalki Avatar! Thus, Gandhiji appeared to him not merely a "Mahatma" as he became to the people of other provinces, but a *Maharshi*, a Saint, our *Guru*, the *Paramatma* or the World-Teacher. Thus, he declared before his Trial-Magistrate, "Gandhi *Maharshi*, our *Guru* to be *Purushottama*, must be capable of *Navarasaspoorthi* (must comprehend the nine varieties of *rasa* aethos) as Sree Ramachandra as...God, in His fulness, must find their fullest consummation in the eventual evolution of my *Guru's* character; and in our utter self-surrender, we believe in it." How this "belief" had gradually faded away and how, in the end, Gopalakrishnayya found that Gandhi was only an "*Uttama Purusha*," i.e., a good and great man, and not "*Purushottama*" or God, are matters of a later story. Suffice it, therefore, to say that, at the time we are speaking of, he felt, along with millions of his countrymen, that, under the Gandhian aegies, a divine dispensation was awaiting our country and that ere long, she would have her final liberation; and he therefore, conducted his campaign at Chirala as a battle-royal, worthy not only of Britain's steel, but even of India's cause and his *Guru's* worthiness also.

But when that much is said, it seems pretty doubtful if Gopalakrishnayya would have so easily abandoned his life's aspiration of the *Goshti* and the *Vidya Peetham*, and actively ranged himself on the side of politics in 1921, but for a personal incident which occurred just at this time. For, we have seen that, after his departure from Masulipatam, Gopalakrishnayya was in need of a "reference in space" for himself and his *Goshti*.

And through the good graces of the Divisional Officer of Ongole — the late Sir S. V. Ramamurty—two plots of land of 58 and one acres, of Ipurupalem village, adjoining Perala, were sanctioned for the Goshti and himself, but almost immediately were withheld on political grounds. His political philosophy, we have already seen, looked upon the earth not as father or mother, but as wife ; and when the Government gave him a rude shock and prevented him from “meeting his mate,” his anger might be imagined. Thus, to fight with that wicked Ravana Raj and vindicate his own husbandship over his land, became an issue of personal honour for Gopalakrishnayya. And he would be a poor husband, indeed, who would not give up his life for the sake of winning back his beloved from the aggressor ! And it was thus that he joined the struggle. And then “Victory or death” became his motto ; and Chirala-Perala, the chief arena for his fight.

CHAPTER IX

CHIRALA-PERALA : THE RAMADANDU

What are the cheif preparations made by Gopalakrishnayya for his fight ? Briefly these were two :

First : He prepared himself, *to do or die*, that is, to attain Swaraj for India, perhaps in Chirala, by the help of the Andhras at least, in the year of grace 1921, and at the end of the year, to crown Mahatma Gandhi not only as the new Emperor of India, but as the new God of the world, and himself take his humble place, as a captain in His corps : or failing that, to place his head as an offering at Gandhiji's feet, during that year of trial. This was the starting preparation for his struggle.

The significance of this will be apparent when we find that there were thousands of others, distinguished leaders, eminent countrymen, including some Presidents and Members of our

Provincial and even All-India Congress Committees, who, with all their distinguished glory and riches, had not made up their minds to do or die, i.e., die for Swaraj or return victorious from the struggle. And this indecision and drift was the most marked in Andhra, it being everywhere, not an inner determination and real resolve to do or die, but a clinging to their petty selves and properties and a looking out for orders from abroad, an anxious awaiting of what Mahatma Gandhi would say or do, an almost cowardly subservience on the leaders, particularly of the North Indian brand.

It was thus a species of self-reliance that prompted Gopalakrishnayya to his achievement; and, what is the same thing, the armoury that he chose for his aid was 'Divine Help'. And when he had to build up an 'army'—albeit a peace-corps—for the fight, it became the Divine Militia or God's Army, his well-known Ramadandu, of whose scheme, the following is a free English rendering.

RAMADANDU: PREAMBLE

"In the sinful age of kali
There is no path for mukthi
Other than the worship
Of Thy blessed name,
Oh Sree Ramachandra!"

The institution of Ramadandu has been traditional with the Andhras. The name of Rama has been dear and sacred to all the Andhra Hindus, Saivite or Vaishnavite. Therefore, Ramadandu has been acceptable to and popular with all our people. And particularly stressful times of anarchy and famine have been responsible for the emergence of Ramadandu.

In modern times, when scepticism and agnosticism have grown, poverty has increased, anarchy is spreading and unrest among people has become chronic and deep-rooted,—to defeat these evils, we require such qualities as calmness, wisdom, control, courage, valour and character. The modern view is that a 'knowledge of enlightened self-respect' will suffice. But Aryan tradition has been different; and our ancients repeatedly

emphasised on constant and devoted service of God as the only path to *Mukthi* or salvation. If we preach self-interest to the people and incite them to action, some results, indeed, will accrue, owing to the increased consciousness of the ego thereby. But it is a matter of common experience that, though easy to rouse a people, it is very difficult to control them in times of excitement. Sometimes it is also impossible to make them quiet. On the other hand, if we introduce the sacred *Ramanam* and the religious impulse into our works; the selfishness that stands outside us will be replaced by *Dharma* (higher duty) and leaders can then supply both the necessary action (*prayogam*) and control (*upasamharam*) for the great Mass-in-Being or *Vishwarupa*. Especially, nowadays, when men have to act collectively in this world, a Godless effort is fruitless, hurtful and even dangerous. While, if we sow the seeds of devotion to God in the minds of the people, they will become wise, self-controlled, courageous, yet calm and quiet, and thus can proceed to any ordered action. Ramadandu has been conceived out of such a faith.

More or less with the same objects, there is an organisation called the Scouts, which is a purely Western product. Its objects are well-known, and it is being endorsed by some of our elders and prescribed for our adoption. But if we compare the relative merits of the two, we will clearly see that the Ramadandu is the more suitable for our conditions and needs.

The word 'Scout' means a 'Seeker.' But a boy-scout can never bloom into the full-blooded warrior that maintains this Empire. His scouting invariably ends in 'guard-of-honouring' to every tramping god, but our volunteer (Ramadandu) sets himself to scout the whereabouts of his *Swarajya Lakshmi*, even as the old vanaras had sought after Sita, the Queen of Sree Ramachandra.

Ramadandu is *Kamadhenu*, the cow of plenty. It helps in all our righteous endeavours. In matters spiritual and economic, political and moral, Ramadandu can intercede and act, for "all works are His."

RULES AND OBJECTS

Name : 'Ramadandu.'

(For promoting Hindu-Muslim etc., unity, it has been agreed that the Muslims might have their "Mahafuzl Islam," and both should work conjointly.)

Chief Office : Ramnagar, Chirala, provisionally.

Objects : 1. To pray ever to God and constantly to utter His holy name.

2. To dedicate one's all for all good causes which will be accepted as *Ramakaryam*, i. e., His deeds, by the *Dharma Sabha*.

Membership : All Andhras who are theists, whether Saivite or Vaishnavite are eligible for its membership.

Deeksha and Uniform : A red garment for underwear, red shirt, red turban, red caste mark on the forehead; beads; *anga-vastram* (napkin); a copper tumbler; hand-stick; two *Chirutalu* or small musical instruments in the hand—every member shall wear these while on duty. While on travel, he should also have a kit-bag containing vessels, match-box and cooking materials. Festive occasions and other days declared as such by the Ramadandu council shall be observed as days of *Deeksha* (duty).

Duties : 1. To know the leader as the *Guru* or God and serve him implicitly.

2. Early morning, after bath, to put on the *Dandu* uniform and with *Ramanam* on lips, to do the appointed tasks ungrudgingly, selflessly and with a pure mind.

3. In times of duty, to be without any selfish desire; and placing one's mind at the feet of Sree Ramachandra, with a clear conscience, to be ready for doing any task, at whatever sacrifice.

4. On days of duty, to have no distinctions of caste or creed; to know all beings as images of God; and with a heart full of love, to act with an equal mind.

5. To reckon vast assemblages, river and sea-side places, temples etc., as places of pilgrimage; and knowing them as the



Ramadasu

manifestations of the Divine, to perform worship and service in all such places.

Dandu Flag : The most pure, illustrious and powerful *Vajra* or Bone of Dadhichi (who gave away his back-bone for the protection of *Dharma*), coupled with the figure of Sree Rama's Master-Volunteer Anjaneya, or some other symbol not inconsistent with the conception of Ramadandu, shall be the insignia on the dandu flag. And standing round the flag-staff, the dandu shall recite verses and songs and conduct Bhajanās (dances).

Organisation—Village Panchayat : Every village shall form a Ramadandu ; and there shall be a *Rama mandiram* or temple for the Gramadandu. Each village dandu shall have four officers—the *Varma* or head ; *Sarma* the minister and priest ; *Gupta* or treasurer and *Dasu* or the servant. The first three shall be elected once a year and the servant by turns every day. The election shall be, as far as possible unanimous, and the servant shall be chosen by the leader. A fifth member shall be elected by lots and the five constitute the Dandu Panchayat. In times of emergency, the leader shall act in anticipation of the Panchayat sanction. It is open for the Panchayat to censure his action subsequently ; but, for the time being, his orders shall be obeyed.

Taluk Sabha : Fifty village units or more according to the present administrative division or otherwise, shall form a taluk sabha. The *Sarma* and *Varma* of every village shall be members of this sabha. All these talukdars shall elect a President or *Rao*. The *Rao* shall be chosen, as far as possible unanimously. A President so chosen shall act as dictator ; but if elected by a majority, he shall only be a constitutional head, executing the decisions of the sabha. The sabha shall also elect, by lots, four other members, who, with the *Rao*, shall constitute the taluk executive. The taluk sabha shall meet twice a year, and its executive once a month. Elections shall be annual.

The taluk leader shall carry out the dandu duties with spotless devotion. He shall indicate the dandu works to every village, solve their doubts, pass judgments and assist, along

with the executive, the panchayats in every way. The executive shall have a secretary, chosen by lots, who will be responsible for the dandu funds and accounts. The sabha shall also have five reporters and two servants, chosen from among the talukdars.

District Sabha: All the *Raos* of the district shall comprise a district sabha. They shall elect a head or *Pantulu* or elder from among themselves. An elder chosen unanimously shall be a dictator, but, if elected by a majority only, a constitutional head. The Board shall meet once a month, and it shall be its duty to lay down rules for the dandu and to see to their successful implementation.

Provincial Assembly: For the several districts of Andhra, there shall be a supreme head, chosen by all the district elders. He shall be called a *Ramadas* or *Hanuman*, *Jagannath* or *Nayak*. The assembly of these elders shall be the Supreme Council or *Dharma Sabha* of the Ramadandu. It shall elect its own minister, and choose its own office for head-quarters. Till that time, Ramnagar-Chirala which is the seat of the Andhra Vidya Peetha Goshti, shall serve as one. Two acres of land have been earmarked for Ramadandu, and it shall be open to the council to choose the spot for the future also. The supreme head, with his council of elders, shall administer the dandu dharma. Our scriptures have laid down that destruction of evil, protection of the good and establishment of *Dharma* or Righteous Rule are the duties of every leader. The supreme head shall, therefore, adopt all such methods as will be conducive to these ends and by his good deeds to assist the Andhra Renaissance and promote devotion and faith among the people. He shall carry out the dandu duties faithfully and with care and devotion. He shall promote, among the people, devotion to God, equality of all living beings, love, piety, selflessness, kindness etc. And such a one alone is entitled to be called a *Nayak* or Leader.

General :

1. Every male Andhra, between the ages of fifteen and fifty years, shall be entitled to be a member of Ramadandu. Boys can be admitted, but they shall be unfit to lead.

2. Every village dandu shall have a temple as its seat of worship and action. Recitations and reading of sacred books shall be the daily avocation of the *mandir*. There shall be pictures of gods or goddesses in the temple, and there shall also be permanent ritual. Religious books and papers devoted to good causes and actions shall also be read in the *mandir*.

3. Every member shall subscribe his mite to the dandu exchequer every month or on every sacred day.

4. There shall be a Notice-board and a Suggestion book.

5. The dandu shall, of its own accord or at the instance of others, assist all popular and good causes. Besides, they shall execute all deeds declared as *Ramakaryam*, either by the Village Panchayat, the Taluk Sabha, District Board or the *Dharma Sabha*. Any act not agreed upon by a majority of the dandu shall not be persisted in.

6. The Provincial gathering of Ramadandus shall meet once a year, for seven days *Sapthaham* at a holy place.

7. Boys shall obey the orders of their teachers, who are members of the dandu.

8. Young men shall rise early; perform ablutions; take physical exercise (hamonised with religion like Hanuman baskies) and offer prayers. Every endeavour shall be accompanied with the holy name. Stories, songs, dances, recitation, lectures and other performances shall be arranged in the evenings.

9. In every village, the protection of the poor shall be a sacred duty for the Ramadandu. For this purpose, asylums will be established for the poor and the beggars in every village, providing for their food, shelter etc., and shall even utilise their energy for any fruitful purpose.

10. A village dandu shall endeavour to spread the glory of God's name through flag, music, procession etc., to the neighbouring villages, and thus fill the world with love and mercy. Rules are prescribed for such dandu marches.

11. The village dandu shall hearken to any cry for help from near or far, and render help as far as possible.

12. To popularise the Ramadandu ideals and assist its affairs among the Andhra people, to publish the news of the various parts and places, and to serve as a forum for the discussion of the rules and laws of Ramadandu, a paper, called the *Ramadandu* shall be started.

Sreasthi Sree Ramarpanamasthu !

It remains to add a brief resume of this organisation, which, it is a pity, had not received at the hands of the Congress authorities, that recognition and support which its actual achievement had entitled it to. In his Presidential address at the Godavary Volunteer Conference at Alamur (1924), Gopalakrishnayya himself narrates his experiences thus: "I feel sad to confess that, since the beginning of this non-co-operation movement, all my trials for extending the Ramadandu organisation obtaining patronage of Congress Committees for it, have been persistently opposed by some of our important workers. God only knows the reason. I don't think even Mahatmaji ever advised these gentlemen against it, but somehow this misfortune continued until, thanks to Mr. [Prakasam's leadership, it was just recently allowed shelter under the Congress auspices, in a resolution passed at a meeting of the (Andhra Provincial Congress) committee, at Nellore. But then I knew, after Mr. Prakasam's resignation from the presidentship of the committee, there would be very little hope of its continued patronage. Even your volunteer organisations at the time of the Cocanada Congress quietly ignored it"

Before departing from this section on Gopalakrishnayya's Ramadandu, a few references to that glorious "Red Army" that he raised will bear remembrance. Thus, the valiant Shaukat Ali, 'the big brother of the two Ali Brothers of those days' once wrote: "I am glad to help a Ramadandu. I gladly held them to be our red army. They appeal to me in their blood-red khaddar uniform. I hope, some day, when the time comes, instead of colouring their white khadi with red dyes, something still more red would give them what they want. I want Andhra to free India. It is the Telanga army of the British that enslaved India for the British. It was Telangas who foolishly

entered the British army and by their devotion and courage, enslaved India for the foreigner *. Now that the motherland is succeeding in rousing her sons to realise their slavery, Ramadandus of Telangana must wipe off this mark of slavery which their forefathers had unwittingly put on the beautiful forehead of the dear, beloved motherland." (1924)

Dr. B. S. Moonje, the veteran Hindu leader, who adopted the word "Ramadandu" for his Bhonsle Military School at Nasik, called his school grounds "Rama Bhoomi;" designated his cadets as "Rama Dandeas;" put on "Ramadandee" as his telegraphic address at Nasik, and got the Hindu Sabha to start a "Rama sena" for its National Militia, on a visit to Ramnagar near Chirala-Perala, observed :

"I was pleased to have an occasion to visit Ramnagar, the place where Gopalakrishnayya breathed his last, which is now a place of pilgrimage to the people of Chirala-Perala and the whole of Andhradesa. He breathed his last, leading the people for Swaraj. He is the man of prophetic vision who coined the word Ramadandu, in which the whole history of Hindusthan for the last five thousand years is concentrated. In that word, is embedded the virtue and valour of Sree Ramachandra, the conqueror of Lanka. For the English word 'cadet', there can be no better term than Ramadandu. And I appeal to the soldierly people of Andhra to create a corps of a lakh of Ramadandus, well organised, well dressed, well disciplined, under one consolidated leadership. And Gopalakrishnayya's soul will then be in peace" (1935).

The revered Pandit Madan Mohan Malavia, in his ripe old age, grief-stricken with the mounting Hindu-Muslim tension and the internecine strife between the two communities in the country, and a growing certainty of the partition of India, when the author mentioned the word *Rama sena*, with a lustre in his eyes exclaimed.

* He was obviously referring to the part played by the Nizam and his army in the 1857 War of Independence, against the Indian interests.

Rama sena ! Duggirala's ! Gopalakrishna's !

My heartiest blessings to Rama sena !

May God help you ! (25-11-1944).

Gopalakrishnayya himself, in his Alamur address, declared : "The little success we had on the conduct of the Chirala affair is, as you all know, entirely due to this organisation. That a population of 18,000 people could give up their ancestral homes and live out in sheds of palm leaves for a long eleven months, was entirely due to this Ramadandu spirit. Can you have the strength to consider its adoption? Our ancestors had Ramadandu to protect them against the plundering Rohillas and the Thugs. Are we cleverer than they? It appeals to our imagination in a more abundant degree than the colourless *Santi sena*. It gives room for no discord. It bears the traditional idiom of response to national troubles. It has demonstrated its utility at least in Chirala. I ask again, can you accept it? Or would you rather wait until our Ramadandu is duly certified and commended by a North Indian boss?" (1924). On the question of its religious aspect, the Andhraratna added: "I can point-blank tell you that, without the religious motif, you can never secure that unquestioning submission to leadership, that undoubting faith in the ideal and ungrudging self-abandonment to the work that are the essential ingredients of a really selfless volunteer. And surely, in Andhra at least, one cannot think of any other religious organisation than the Ramadandu. At least the masses of Andhras know it and understand it."

And finally, Sree C. D. Deshmukh, a former Finance Minister of India, on his return from a visit to China, remarked : "In our neighbouring China, with whom we are to compete eventually willy-nilly, millions of party workers are in day to day touch with the people, and they are in a position to assess the conditions and serve their needs; whereas, in our country, there is no political party which commands millions of activists, and the small number that worked among the people usually remained engaged in all sorts of elections."

Gopalakrishnayya thus showed the way. But alas ! that the leadership in the country could not tread his path. Nor could it raise any alternative corps of its own all these decades.

CHAPTER X

CHIRALA-PERALA : SOME INCIDENTS AND EVENTS

We shall now proceed to narrate some of the incidents and events of the Chirala-Perala campaign, which, from their intrinsic worth, will be fit for dramatisation in any self-respecting society.

Gopalakrishna's preparations for his Ramadandu were already complete when the non-co-operation movement began; and, in his Presidential address at the Godavari District Students' Conference held at Rajahmundry on 22-1-1921, he described to his audience the Ramadandu started by him. But it was not until March of that year that he and his movement became well-known. On the 28th of March 1921, the All-India Congress Committee met at Bezwada, to formulate its famous triple programme, of one crore congress members, one crore rupees, and 20 lakhs of spinning wheels,—the "men, money and munitions" as Mr. C. R. Das had put it. By that time already, Chirala had finished a few preliminary skirmishes, and earned public recognition by sending twelve of its citizens, including an aged lady, to jail, in the course of a non-payment struggle of their municipal taxes. Incidentally, that was the first occasion in all-India when a woman went to jail for the country's sake. And when the All-India Congress Committee met at Bezwada, Gopalakrishnayya arrived there in a special train, with about a thousand of his dandu troops; and the part played by him and his volunteers during that historic gathering deserves more than a passing mention.

At Bezwada, though Gopalakrishna came with a band of strong, disciplined and well organised, non-violent soldiers, their

presence was at first utterly ignored ; and the Reception Committee worked up a cumbersome volunteer corps for receiving the Congress leaders and the vast concourse of people who were expected to gather. The Congress recruits were mostly educated people ; while Gopalakrishna's army was from the common folks ; and these latter were found to be not only more earnest and capable, but were more amenable to discipline and service than their more enlightened brethren. The Congress leaders organised hotels to feed their volunteers and others ; Gopalakrishnayya ridiculed the idea of *Anna-vikrayam* (selling food) as unnational, procured free for his Ramandandu members, from the local merchants. The Congress volunteers worked almost leaderless ; while the Ramandandu had, in their picturesque and cultured leader, a most inspiring personality.

There were about two or three lakhs of people gathered from all parts of the country to pay their homage to Gandhiji, whom Gopalakrishna himself had lately proclaimed an *Avatar*, and other leaders ; and the evening meeting was a remarkable thing,—“quite a sea of humanity,” as Acharya Gidwani had put it. And inexperienced and disunited among themselves as the Congress volunteers were, they proved incapable even of organising a public meeting. The rush of the people was so great that, in their attempts to have *Darshan* of the leaders, each push ended in a big tide, and actually there were at least two or perhaps three moving waves of humanity ; and on those occasions, some of them were actually twenty to thirty feet above the ground, resting merely in the air, back to back and back to face. On one of those occasions, particularly, the very life of the Nation's idol, Mahatma Gandhi, was in danger, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the massive arms of Shaikat Ali could form a cordon round Gandhiji's frail frame and to ward off the crowd and lead him out of danger. The Congress volunteer organisation thus completely broke down ; and if there were no serious casualties on that day, it was due solely to providential mercy.

The first day's meeting thus proved a fiasco ; and it was repeated the next day. On this occasion, the volunteers bucked

up a little ; but their organisation was too loose and inept to serve a huge meeting of that nature and magnitude. On the third day, therefore, when all their efforts had failed, the Congress leaders, out of sheer helplessness, turned to Gopalakrishnayya for succour. Gopalakrishna cheerfully undertook the responsibility ; but insisted that he should be allowed a free hand in the arrangements. The proviso was easily conceded ; and at 3 A. M., bands of Ramadandu volunteers were despatched to the maidan or the meeting-ground and were stationed in lines, forming squares of sitting space for the people, and broad streets for the leaders' cars to pass through ; and before dawn, a thoroughly well-organised and beautiful human city of two to three lakhs of people was formed ; and from 6 A. M., the leaders were gradually ushered in and led in procession, through lane after lane, addressing the people in every four-square corner. Everyone was pleased, overwhelmed with joy ; and all praised Gopalakrishnayya and his Ramadandu.

There was one incident of the day particularly, which must be described. Limits were prescribed for the people to sit ; but a police officer tried to cross, with impunity, one of those limits. There was a wordy tug-of-war between the Police and the volunteers ; and at one stage, an open rupture was feared. All eyes, including those of Gandhiji, were on the scene ; Gopalakrishna arrived there and implored the officer to desist ; and, when all persuasion failed, he prostrated himself before that gentleman, telling him that, if the latter must advance, it could only be by walking over their corpses, and he offered himself as the first to fall. The official was at last moved and yielded, whereupon he was conveyed back over the heads of the sitting people, to his allotted place in the rear.

Immediately after the Bezwada meeting, Gandhiji began a tour in Andhradesa, in the course of which he visited Chirala on 7th April 1921. Gopalakrishnayya made elaborate arrangements to receive the great guest in his sandy home and an address was presented on behalf of the Vidya Peetha Goshti, written in Telugu, with an iron quill on a palm leaf, besmeared with turmeric paste. Gandhiji was greatly pleased ; and, it is said

that he kissed it to his eyes, saying he would cherish it as a treasure. Gandhiji also laid the foundation stone of the Ramnagar village; and, after the ceremonies were over, Gopalakrishna had to see him off, when not only the future of the Chirala campaign was discussed and settled, but he raised also his famous 'Minute of Dissent' to Gandhism; and it happened thus.

Gandhiji, in those days, was describing his satyagrahic method as "Prahlada Sadhana", because child Prahlada, in the epic, would receive all the blows of his father's might, but not retaliate even in thought. And Gandhiji's precept was to get killed without any attempt at killing. While commending the idea to his audience, Gopalakrishnayya, in his speeches, would, at the same time add that "Prahlada Sadhana, in due course, would culminate in Narasimham," as, indeed, it did in the Bhagavata story. But this Narasimham being a sign of a bloody revolution, red in tooth and fierce in claw, Gopalakrishnayya's critics in Andhra, and particularly 'Desabhakta' Konda Venkatappayya Pantulu, President of the Provincial Congress Committee, became suspicious and even afraid as to whether Gopalakrishnayya would lead them to paths of violence, especially in view of the red colour which he chose for his Ramadandu uniform and flag. At the same time, they found the logic of the 'Andhraratna' was irresistible and were therefore puzzled and perplexed at heart. Accordingly, when Gandhiji was visiting Chirala, the 'Desabhakta' respectfully presented his doubts to the Mahatma and requested him to advise the Red leader suitably. Thereupon, after the Chirala meetings, while the three were driving to China Ganjam for catching the Mail train—the Mail-halts at Chirala were stopped in those days, because of the non-violent "rebellion" of its townsfolk,—Gandhiji quietly mooted the question, and the following conversation then took place between him and the 'Andhraratna.'

Gandhiji: Now, come on, young man, what about this Prahlada Sadhana?

G. K.: Nothing, Mahatmaji. It is simply this. You have described your satyagraha as Prahlada Sadhana. And I merely

explain it in terms of the Bhagavata, and suggest that, one day, it might culminate in Narasimham, as it, indeed, did in the epic.

Gandhiji: I hope you are not presenting this aspect to your audiences.

G. K.: Why? I do tell them.

Gandhiji: And how do they respond?

G. K.: They have read the Bhagavata. They have got the culture in them. And they appreciate it very much.

Gandhiji: (After five minutes of silent thinking)—well, Gopalakrishnayya, I would advise you not to refer to this aspect any more in your speeches.

G. K.: As you please, Mahatmaji.

And from that time onwards, it was well-known that Gopalakrishnayya never more referred to this aspect of the situation; but it was also true that Gandhiji never more described his method as "Pahlada Sadhana." As a critic once put it, thus "Gopalakrishnayya became a big Question Mark in the life of Mahatma Gandhi!"

The exodus decided upon when Gandhiji was at Chirala was a remarkable event in the campaign. Direct civil disobedience, through non-payment of municipal taxes, with all its attendant risks of prosecutions, jail-filling, sales, auctions, demonstrations and so forth, was felt to be one course open to the people in their fight against the Municipality. But Gandhiji felt that the people might not be strong enough to bear the strain for long, and he feared that violence might break out at one stage or another. An alternative was, therefore, sought for and it was found that there was a less risky and equally efficacious method, which was to leave the town altogether and live outside the municipal limits and to let the municipality die of inanition. And Gandhiji, it is said, advised the latter course. Gopalakrishnayya loyally took up the idea, and it was really a sight for the gods to see how 15,000 to 16,000 men, women and children; young, middle-aged and old; irrespective of caste, creed or sex; had, at the leader's bidding, left their ancestral homes; migrated to the fields adjoining the town; and for a long eleven months

amidst sun and rain, through weal and woe, despite threats, smiles and Governmental persecution, they stayed on there, in due loyalty to their chief, "Duggiralayya."

Scenes are described in that wonderful exodus as to how, at mid-day, in scorching sun, while the sands were burning hot, pregnant ladies and women with babes in arms—men and women, with their belongings on their heads and shoulders, went cheerfully through the ordeal. The Police and the officials were on the alert to defeat the people, or at least to make an attachment or two for realising their dues; but such was the ingenuity of their ever-resourceful leader, and such was the vigilance of his ever-watchful Ramadandu, that all those efforts proved of no avail. The help rendered by the Ramadandu, in particular, not only for a safe and orderly conveyance of men and things from the town, but in the erection of sheds for their living; maintenance of peace, order and good government during their one-year's stay, is rather imagined than described. Panchayats were held to deal out justice to the delinquents; and more than one defaulter was levied a handsome 'fine' for the benefit of the new "exchequer". The Government manoeuvred many times to wean away the people; but every one of them was utterly defeated. Government officials were 'boycotted' and had to retire for want of food or even water; and the great Rajah Saheb of Panagal himself had to retreat for want of a hearer! The villages were completely deserted; and in the new "Palmyrah City," Gopalakrishna's word was Law!

In the earlier stages of the campaign, we are told, there was an incident which ought to be narrated. There is a village called Vetapalem adjoining Chirala. And its leaders decided upon a boycott of the Panchayat Court sanctioned by the Government. The proposal was blessed by Gopalakrishnayya who went there personally to supervise the preliminary arrangements; took pledges from the elders of the different communities in the village; reconciled the various factions among them; and came back satisfied that the boycott would go off splendidly on the election day. Everything was thus ready; but on the appointed day, when Gopalakrishnayya was away at Chirala, the officials

came with a posse of constables and threatened the leaders and coerced them to participate in the election. Gopalakrishnayya sent one or two volunteers in advance and himself arrived at the place afternoon, when already, the thirty elders broke their troth; mustered strong their followers; and a huge meeting was assembled, to which the Tahsildar was reading out the rules for the benefit of the electors!

At first, Gopalakrishnayya felt aghast at the sight before him. Still, not losing heart, he drove by the side of the meeting and alighted where the officers were sitting, and proceeded straight to the dais and sat there, as if nothing had happened. Meanwhile the officials began to feel nervous; the men assembled looked at each other; leaders bent their heads in shame; the Police got puzzled; and their chief passed word to the constabulary to be on bundobust. The Tahsildar soon gained enough presence of mind to exchange an apologetic word or two with Gopalakrishna, telling him that they were merely doing their duty; and almost solicitous of his permission to proceed with the rest of the job, he even offered his bungalow for Gopalakrishna to retire. The latter thereupon thanked the tahsildar for his kindness; but had no need for any of his solicitude; said that he just came to see if the people were his own or were on the side of the Government; and, as he beheld with his own eyes that the Government had won, he had no more business there; therefore, he would certainly not impede their work, but go. And so saying, he coolly left the place.

The meeting itself was held in the open, on a sandy soil, surrounded by a wild fence, which had a few openings for entrance. After Gopalakrishnayya left, those entrances were strongly guarded by the Police to prevent any of the audience from getting out. Gopalakrishnayya left the meeting thus alone, entered a neighbouring palmyrah grove, and facing the trees which were equally strong in number as the meeting was perhaps in men and were, indeed, much taller in stature, shooting their leafy tufts aloft into the skies, while this puny humanity had

sunk into the earth; and he began to address them in a loud tone and commanding voice.

It may be stated here that Gopalakrishnayya was one of our greatest orators of the day—he was easily the best that recent Andhra has produced—and already, by this time, he could command an audience of 50 to 60 thousand people. His addresses were of the highest order, not only in respect of results—where he easily moved millions,—but in point of sheer quality, were unsurpassed. They were addressed to the mass, yet tuned in the highest key of culture; were interspersed with song and verse, wit and humour; addressed to the best in man; the style was superb; and the people would dance with joy or roar in laughter. As his method was the Pauranik or the Kathaka, his addresses became more or less of the nature of Kalakshepams. He could speak in English, Telugu and even in Sanskrit; and it is a pity that not one of his many discourses was faithfully reported or preserved, either in extenso or with its proper intonation, gesture or idiom. It shows how far backward we, in Andhra, were in point of deserving our great men in those days.

But to return to the Palmyrah address, no report of it, like most others, has either been preserved; but, in one word, it was an address to the trees! In the course of it, he sought to unburden himself to his 'audience', who, he said, were physically, morally, in every way, superior to the race of human pigmies who betrayed their country, broke their plighted word, and submitted themselves in a cowardly manner to Governmental Bahadurism. Endowed with his own brilliance and powerful thought and expression, he added now a stirring indignation at the treachery of the elders; and addressing a 'non-communicative' nature, he told those trees that they were his only fit company; and, to him, all men in this country were dead! Men in this land, he went on, had no sense of honour, no respect for vows, no fear of shame; they became puny size, bended in brow, and submissive to slavery. While those trees were tall in stature, erect in pose, proud in disposition, looking aloft into the high heavens, and were unlikely to move or

change easily out of fear, incapable of sordid betrayal, and, therefore, were fitter assemblage for him to pour forth his aching heart !

In loud tones, dead earnest about himself, forceful and impassioned in manner, and with a fiery tongue, sparkling with super wisdom, rather of the heavens than of this earth, addressing the trees and the divinity in them, he soon made himself audible to the 5,000 or 6,000 men nearby, against whom he had but turned his back a short while ago. And one by one, through one pretext or another, those men also bestirred themselves and gradually began to glide away from the meeting-place, unobserved by or perhaps with the silent acquiescence of the police on guard, and they began taking their seats under the palmyrah shelter. Thus, within 10, 15, 30 minutes, there came slowly 10, 20, 50 and the figure was swelling ; and all along Gopalakrishnayya went on addressing the trees and reviling the base perfidy and inhumanity of man. And as his audience was increasing, the Police got anxious ; the tahsildar was still reading his ' Rules ' ; people were getting restive ; and already a fifty of them had left, when a batch of two or three was hindered in its way at one of the exits. After a full half-hour's performance before the trees, Gopalakrishnayya looked back for a minute and beholding the batches struggling still to come, acclaimed in a loud voice ; " No power on earth can prevent a determined soul from coming out. Those who are willing shall not be stayed by the bayonets of a hired constabulary ! "

Straight-away, up rose a hundred men on all sides ; and with the aid of their hand-sticks, they felled down the loose sandy-fencing and made a hundred pathways ; and in less than a twinkle, all the five or six thousands less their thirty leading men and their body-guard were restored to Gopalakrishnayya and his Palm trees. And for full three hours or more, i. e., till it was past 6 P. M. when the time for the panchayat election automatically expired, the Palmyrah discourse went on in high spirits and in great glee, while the poor tahsildar and his helpless associates stayed on, but the panchayat itself could not be formed.

And thus ended one of the most picturesque and dramatic episodes of Gopalakrishna's campaign, in supreme triumph for his Lord, Sree Ramachandra, but to the mighty grief of the Government and its myrmidons. The story is worth mentioning not only because it interests the mind, but we are yet to find another man who had the cheek to defy an opponent under such disheartening circumstances—literally he was one against 6,000—or who managed a victory in the manner in which Gopalakrishnayya did. We read in books that some of our great men and women had wept over the loss of a dead wife or husband, and opened their hearts to the neighbouring trees and plants; or even that, in their love-frenzy, they beheld their beloved in every bush or shrub which they passed by in their quest. But it sounds absolutely novel that Gopalakrishnayya should have wrung out a victory out of these trees! And the more so that the trees themselves should have thus willingly volunteered, where men had failed to serve! And thus Gopalakrishnayya showed the greatness of the human spirit, as opposed to the forces of treachery and brute-force, and he established too, the kinship between man and the tree, a truth hallowed by the researches of another distinguished countryman of ours, viz., Sir J. C. Bose. What Bose showed in his laboratory, Gopalakrishnayya revealed in practical life; and both are great, because they showed us the unity between the living and the non-living.

We must pass over, however unwillingly, a good deal of the story relating to the day to day affairs of the struggle. Gopalakrishna himself was present for over half the period and when he was clapped in jail, his inspiration guided the people and led them to some extent. Every day, there were judicial tribunals, legislative enactments and administrative orders; and almost every affair of every individual citizen was within the purview of the panchayat over which Gopalakrishnayya presided. Doubts disappeared in his presence, fears vanished, and life became a new joy to the subjects of the "Gopalakrishna Raj."

During the month of October, 1921, Gopalakrishnayya went to Berhampore, the seat of the Andhra Conferences that year,

where he was arrested and sentenced for one year under Section 108 Cr. P. C. Shortly afterwards, he was brought back from jail, tried for "sedition" under Section 124-A, I. P. C. and convicted, but the good Judge said : "The two sentences to run concurrently." The story of these trials will be found in the two succeeding chapters. And when Gopalakrishnayya was removed from the scene of action, no one else came forward to take up his work ; and in the course of the next five or six months, in the wake of the withdrawal of the great non-co-operation movement, Chirala-Perala ebbed away.

One word more remains to be added before closing this chapter. And it is this. Through all the incidents and events of a unique campaign, what was the image that its leader, Gopalakrishnayya had created on the public mind? For an answer to this question, let us not turn to his numerous followers, admirers or flatterers. But to quote once again from the late E. C. Ethirajulu Naidu already cited, in the same Madras Legislative Council speech, the Dewan Bahadur thus observed :

"In one of his speeches, Mr. Gopalakrishnayya is said to have remarked that a domestic quarrel has developed into the battle of Kurukshetra. This aptly indicates that the Chirala movement, which began with spite towards the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Ravula Subbarao, has now assumed serious proportions. By the aforesaid statement, he wants others to believe that Chirala, with its recalcitrant residents, represents 'Pandavas' ; the Government and their representatives 'Kauravas' and he, Sree Krishna, has come to save the 'Pandavas'. By analogies of this kind and apt quotations from the Puranas, rendered more harmonious by his melodious tone, Mr. Gopalakrishnayya has been fascinating the people here who are mostly uneducated and ignorant."

And from the popular side, it should be recorded that, as a mark of its appreciation of his great services and work, the Guntur District Conference which met in Ponnur during 1921 resolved to confer on Gopalakrishnayya the unique title of "Andhraratna". And it is significant that, through all these

forty-five years, *there has been but one Andhraratna and none other.* For, truly, he was the most precious jewel of the Andhra people of his time—nay, as some one has observed, he was a “Bharataratna” long before this honorific was instituted by the present Government of India.

CHAPTER XI

THE BERHAMPORE TRIAL

(COURTESY, THE ANDHRA PROVINCIAL CONGRESS PUBLICITY BUREAU)

“Andhraratna” Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya was arrested on the 1st October 1921, at Berhampore Railway Station, under a warrant issued by the District Magistrate of Ganjam. On the 2nd morning, he was taken to Chicacole Road, to take his trial before the District Magistrate. The trial commenced at 12 noon. The preliminary order, under Section 112, handed over to Mr. Gopalakrishnayya just before the commencement of the trial, reads as follows :

Text of Notice

To

Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya of Guntur District.

“Whereas information has been laid by the District Superintendent of Police, Ganjam, that on 24th and 26th September, at mass meetings in Berhampore within the limits of my jurisdiction, you delivered speeches calculated to stir up hatred and contempt of the Government by law established in British India and to incite the people to revolt by making an obscene remark about the King-Emperor, by comparing the Government with Ravana, Balichakravarti and Hiranyakasyapa, and by elaborating these comparisons with false accusations that the present Government has ruined the people of the country, and asserting that it must and will be destroyed in three months ; and further, by threat of

what will happen to those who do not support the rebellion; whereas also you sought to stir up enmity between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin by taunting the Brahmins with their alleged miserable conditions and abusing non-Brahmins as traitors to their country for co-operating with Government; I hereby call upon you to show cause why you should not be ordered to furnish security, in a sum of Rs. 1000, to be of good behaviour for a period of one year, with one surety in a like amount.

(Sd.) T. G. RUTHERFORD,
District Magistrate,
2nd October 1921".

The Statement

Mr. Gopalakrishnayya gave his statement orally in English "in order to expedite the business of the Court." But he took care to sign it in Telugu. His statement was in the form of a running commentary on the allegations in the preliminary order, with dialogues interposed here and there. It ran as follows:

"It is a fact that I spoke at the Andhra Conferences on the 24th and 26th of September and at the mass meeting at Berhampore on the 27th. My speeches were calculated to give a correct idea of the mental and moral constitution of the existing Government. I do not know whether they are 'stirring up hatred and contempt.' But I certainly 'incited' them to prepare themselves for civil disobedience eventually. If, however, you wish to use the word 'revolt', it is revolt in the realm of morality and of ideas, but certainly not revolt in the military sense of the term, as our aim is to purify the Britisher in his conduct towards men and things"

Magistrate: You made an obscene remark about the King-Emperor?

Gopal: What is that?

Here the Prosecuting Inspector read out a passage from Mr. Gopalakrishnayya's speech of the 24th which showed that Mr. Gopalakrishnayya and others had, on one occasion, corrected

a drunken lout of Chirala who was crying out: 'Ping George ki Jai!' and asked him to say 'King George ki Jai!'

Gopal: I brought up the remark about King George to show the type of allies that are gone in for by the local officials in despair. Continuing the statement, Mr. Gopalakrishnayya said: "I compared the Government to Ravana, Bali and Hiranyakasyapa. I have been doing so for the last six or seven months particularly, because they present the exact analogies to the different aspects of the existing Government from the Puranas, which alone are competent to be presented to the masses so as to help their understanding instead of stale common places or boring philosophic presentations. I have elaborated these comparisons in order to show up the aesthetic implications of the setting which, I am glad to say, is very exact.

'That the present Government has ruined the country,' is true and not false. My assertion that 'It must and will be destroyed' holds true. I never mentioned any months in the absolute sense, though it is our hope to attain Swarajya in three months, according to Mahatmaji's gauging of the situation.

Magistrate: You seem to be an exceedingly popular preacher. You raise laughter.

Gopal: Laughter prevents people from becoming morbid. It lubricates the soul.

Continuing, he said: About 'threatening those who do not support rebellion.' The fact that is alleged was only a spiritual remonstrance, a moral admonition that one cannot escape judgment before the Maker of things on the Judgment Day.

"I did say that some non-Brahmins are traitors. What I meant was that there are some amongst us who do not call themselves Kshatrias, Vysyas or Sudras, but go in for an exceedingly funny appellation, 'non-Brahmin,' which, by its very nature, implies hatred of the Brahmins. And when the Government countenanced the birth and growth of these communities which is so avowedly anti-Brahmin, I felt that the Government

will be sporty enough to rub in our statements pretty complacently. The Government has overtly and covertly assisted the impudence of this non-Brahmin community, and thus themselves 'stirred up enmity', if any, as alleged in the order. As regards 'showing cause'. I am a non-co-operator and I have nothing to say, but to quietly, meekly and humbly submit to whatever punishment the Government choose to inflict on me and pray for the betterment of my countrymen as well as of the Government.

"It is unfortunate that the charge of having made 'obscene remarks' about King George has come up against me. I am afraid it is due to a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of my language in its context. It is but right that I should express my regret about it. I have already explained the circumstances in which I used the quotation. It was never my own, and I am equally indignant that such a remark should have fallen from an ally of the Government in my village."

Mr. Gopal continued : "About the mythological statement, I shall make a general remark to dispel delusion. First about Ravana, while comparing the existing Government to Ravana, I prefaced it with a correct thesis of Rakshasas, contrary to the current notion. I said, Rakshasas are not devils or demons but may be human, with an emphasis on a particular manifestation of egoism. That is why I instanced Ravana's snatching away of others' women and contrasted it with the existing Government's snatching away of others' wealth. I also said that, otherwise, Ravana was a very great man, worshipping a thousand Lingams every morning. In a similar manner, while bringing in the analogy of Hiranyakasyapa, I said, the British Government stood to us in the relation of a father.

Magistrate : And that is why you wish to get rid of them in three months?

Gopal : That is because they are just reaching the sublimity of egoism. I was not quite sure, and expressly stated that I did not know whether they were the one or the other, Bali or Hiranyakasyapa. They were not ripe. We were yet in the realm of hypothesis.

"In the case of Bali, he gracefully and graciously offered what was asked of him. And I said that it was a genuine relation which we all hoped for, as an ally in an Imperial brotherhood. Regarding the three months' limit, Mahatma Gandhi has, on many an occasion, expressed his conviction that we will get Swarajya in three months; and being a faithful disciple, I have nothing to doubt about it.

"Regarding the currency notes, I have examined a hypothetical situation which, by the way, must be popular and not abstruse; and this I have been doing on many a platform. Further, it is quite clear from the evidence that not a single currency note has been cashed. The whole thing was purely academical.

"It is rather interesting that while two thousand persons attended the meeting of the 27th, people from the cultured strata of society have not come forward to depose to the correct understanding, appreciation and revaluation of my speech. I always present my statements with force, with clarity and with mythological allusions, seasoned with plenty of humour. I do it deliberately, in order to prevent the masses from getting morbid over the ills of Government and to preserve an equipoise in their feelings. Differences in outlook and differences in taste and language are perhaps the reason why these misinterpretations or misunderstandings have occurred. Whatever looks indecent is merely a difference in idiom. Differences in idiom may result in creating a false sense of indecency, but that is all.

"About the Prince of Wales, I mentioned, not 12,000 but 1200 as having died in the Punjab. I said, we were in mourning—not in 'pollution'—and could not extend to him a hearty welcome.

"Generally-speaking, my view is in accord with the Congress view, and particularly I follow Mahatma Gandhi's precepts. I have nothing more to add."

MAGISTRATE'S QUESTIONS

Magistrate: Do you deny the charge of having stirred up enmity against the Government?

Gopal : I do deny it. Being a sport myself, I do not create enmity against the Government, nor do I intend it.

Magistrate : And about creating disaffection ?

Here followed a discussion as to the exact meaning to be attached to the word "disaffection."

At last, Mr. Gopal said : "Now I shall give you a concrete instance. Mahatma Gandhi has said that the present Government is 'satanic.' I am a follower of Mahatmaji, and I also believe in it. Now is that disaffection ?"

Magistrate : It may be so, but you say you do not stir up enmity.

Gopal : I do not.

Magistrate : That will do.

The proceedings closed for the day at this stage (5 P. M.). The case was adjourned for judgment to 9 A. M. next day (3rd October, 1921). Mr. Gopal was released on his personal cognisance, so that his friends might have an opportunity of spending some more time with him. Next morning at 9-30 A. M. the Magistrate summoned Mr. Gopal before him and the following conversation took place between them.

Magistrate : Will you sign the bond and furnish security ?

Gopal : No. As a Congressman, I cannot do it.

Magistrate : I am sorry. I would much rather prefer your executing the bond. But since you refuse, I must finish the order. But why don't you execute a bond ?

Gopal : I cannot do it now. I shall give security to a free Government.

Magistrate : What do you mean by a free Government ? It is probably anarchy.

Gopal : Why ? This very Government itself will evolve into a free Government.

Magistrate : It will, if you help those of us who are trying our best to evolve it. Why do you carry on your political agitation with so much rancour ?

Gopal : There is no rancour. It is only righteous indignation. It may appear to have a veneer of rancour.

Magistrate : Why should it?

Gopal : We are in opposite political camps. So, it may look like rancour to the prejudiced eyes of our opponents.

Magistrate : You were in England for five years. You know the political agitation there is not carried on with so much rancour.

Gopal : No. But the Government there is more sporty.

Magistrate : Do you think so?

Gopal : Yes. Don't you see how Lloyd George has agreed to another conference with De Valera accepting his *sine qua non*?

Magistrate : But Lord Reading saw Mr. Gandhi.

Gopal : But not in a similar manner and with the same credentials as De Valera. What is the term of my imprisonment?

Magistrate : One year's simple imprisonment or such earlier term if you furnish security.

The District Magistrate wished to know if any special arrangements were to be made for diet. Mr. Gopal said that he was not well and that he would be glad if he was provided with milk and wheat diet, and continue his usual medicine. The Magistrate made a note of it and agreed to give wide discretion to the Jail Superintendent. Mr. Gopal thanked the Magistrate for his courtesy towards himself and his friends throughout the proceedings. He also observed that such courtesy was not usually forthcoming.

When he came out, he was asked as to how he took to the charges. He said : "One at least is absurd, namely, that of having used 'obscene remarks'. If I am asked as to why it was mentioned in the meeting at all, I would reply that truth, however ugly it is and however unaesthetic its form, must be told. Drawing-room susceptibilities are out of place in a gathering of grim politics. Mahatma Gandhi appears in his *Kaupeenam* (loin-cloth), before an audience of 50,000. These people would probably explain that the demonstration is highly obscene.* This

*Actually, Mr. Churchill subsequently described Gandhiji as "the half-naked Fakir of India," though the British Royalty received the Mahatma quite on courteous terms at the time of the Round Table Conference.

is an usual subterfuge of the Government to damn the votaries of the movement. I am never under the influence of 'moralic acid.' Regarding the other charges, they are the usual story everywhere, and my statement is explanatory enough. The one new thing is about those mythological allusions. My thesis about Rakshasas and their attainment of *Moksha* through *Sathru Sadhana*, if properly placed before the public, will clearly obviate the charge and incidentally present the different aspects of the existing Government in a typically Indian manner to a typically Indian audience, uncorrupted in their mentality and unalloyed in their instinct." He added: "I do not hate the non-Brahmins. I have all love for them. But I grieve that some of them are opposed to the Swarajya movement."

The behaviour of the District Magistrate, Mr. T. G. Rutherford, throughout the trial was exceedingly gentlemanly. He was good-humoured and was smiling visibly on occasions, more especially when P. W. 1. was explaining how, according to Mr. Gopalakrishnayya, Lord Willingdon resembled Ravana with his ten heads—the eight ministers were eight heads; Lord Willingdon's own head was the ninth; and on the top of it all, Sir P. Tyagaraya Chetty's was the tenth! At the last remark, the Magistrate burst out laughing. He also mentioned that the Government of Madras were likely to make special arrangements for political prisoners and that Mr. Gopalakrishnayya might take his own bed, cot and other things.

The Magistrate's order contained the following passage: "This District has hitherto been spared such excess of political madness; and I see no reason why, if the accused has been allowed to pursue his career of incitement to disaffection unchecked elsewhere, he should be allowed to do so here. Further, even from his manner in Court, it is clear that he has the art of putting an audience in good humour with itself and the speaker and is therefore more dangerous as an agitator. That he is utterly reckless is shown by his disobeying an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, issued after the delivery of the speech now under consideration."

CHAPTER XII

THE SECOND TRIAL

While serving his imprisonment in the Trichinopoly jail, Gopalakrishnayya was brought to Madras and thence to Masulipatam, to undergo a second trial, this time under Section 124-A, of the Indian Penal Code, for sedition. The trial took place on the 10th, 11th and 12th November, 1921; and, as may be expected, the entire proceedings were sparkled with wit, humour, sarcasm and the highest culture and patriotism, but limitations of space prevent a detailed chronicling of its full story here. Therefore, we shall content ourselves with a bare recital of (1) the Magistrate's Notice, (2) Gopalakrishnayya's Preliminary Statement and (5) his Final Statement, which last, from a real standpoint, stands out as the highest and best justification of the Gandhian non-co-operation as a means to the attainment of Swaraj, which again shall be not a mere Indian Raj, but a world order, or universal *Dharma*.

(1) C. C. 4 of 1921. Notice for the Accused

In the Court of the District Magistrate, Kistna.

To

Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya garu, now in Central Jail, Trichinopoly.

Notice is hereby given to you that a case against you, under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, filed before this Court, stands posted to 10th November, 1921, at 11 A. M., at Masulipatam.

You can engage a pleader if you desire to do so.

Given under my hand and seal, this 27th day of October, 1921.

(Sd.) H. H. F. M. TYLER
District Magistrate

(2) *Preliminary Statement*

On the second day, the accused was handed over a copy of the paragraphs of his speeches complained against by the prosecution, and was asked to give his preliminary statement thereon. The accused stated that he would take them up, one by one, and comment thereon. Before that, he proposed to read his preliminary statement. And Gopalakrishnayya then read the following preliminary statement which, the Congress reporter said, "made a profound impression on the Court, especially the Chirala-Perala tragedy."

"The speech, as reported, is an insult to justice, as the Court cannot correctly appreciate and appraise my intention, my mentality and action with such an incoherent and intangible bundle of mutilated sentences. I sympathise with the shorthand reporter. I know he has done his job splendidly well at Berhampore. Possibly the poor fellow was exhausted at the moment owing to a storm of emotion upsetting him, as, after all, he is my kith and kin, and his lancorous look, I prophesy, betrays an early resignation of his bad job, which compels him to damn himself in this manner before his own countrymen.

The chief features of the report are : 1. Omission of the nucleus ; 2. Murder of sequence ; 3. Mutilation of illustration ; 4. Wrong reproduction of sound ; 5. A false knowledge of allusion, during the mention of which possibly negligence of not taking it down at the time in full owing to a self-confidence. And all these, who knows, may be due to a tip from above, to cook it up to suit the fancy of the prosecution, and what is more, a serious lack of knowledge on the part of the Public Prosecutor regarding the idiom both in Telugu and English languages.

"I am sorry to say that my amiable adversary, the Public Prosecutor, does not get even a pass-mark in this, his examination in the subject of literatures. Perhaps he studied well, but is nervous in the hall for having to send a fellow-being of his own to jail for opinions which, I detect, he himself in his heart of hearts, cherishes and believes in.

"A misapprehension of the significance of my statement owing perhaps to want of good discipline in logic for hypothetical situations which I presented and examined in my speech, as for example the question of currency notes, is confounded to be the presentation of the actuals.

"General lack of wider outlook and a penetrating vision on the part of the Prosecution and the most important of all, the lack of aesthetic sensitivity to see in full length the suggestions and implications, are other defects. But all these omissions and commissions are due to all the instruments of this trial being tools in the bureaucratic machine which is still 'too wooden, too iron, too antedeluvian' to be eligible to rule or to be just.*

"At this moment, alas, even humility wants to be immodest and impels me to say that the Government has to thank me for having been so considerate, so compassionate, so human and so homely, in my references always to them and their law even in the face of such an extraordinary provocation I had from them as that with regard to Chirala-Perala tragedy. If Mahatmaji is responsible for the weal of three hundred millions of my countrymen, I, as a humble follower of the *Rishi*, am at least responsible for the welfare of 15,000 souls, for whom the sense of d—d prestige of this Government has created a miserable hell for the last seven or eight months, and who knows, how long! If you are an Irishman—I do not know who you are—Sir, you will know what Chirala means for me. It has been a continuous moral and mental exercise for a long twelve month, a wonderful discipline in social psychology and action; and if I had borne or bear or am capable of bearing hatred and contempt towards you, you should have raised by now in that place a wild crop of Dyers, an edition-de-luxe of the Punjab wrong."

The accused then began to read the paragraphs objected to and commented upon them seriatim in a manner inimitable

*These words were quoted from the speech of the then Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montague, in his famous declaration of July, 1917.

and humorous in that grim situation, and at the end, remarked : " I have [nothing further to say, except to ask you to send to jail as many of my countrymen as you can, and thus accelerate the establishment of Swaraj in my country." Afterwards, the Magistrate framed the charge that Gopalakrishnayya's speech came under Section 124-A, I. P. C., and he should be tried in his Court.

On the third day, November 12th, Gopalakrishnayya read out his final statement, which, among the documents of a similar nature, ranks as historic and epoch-making. The Statement reads as follows :

INDIAN POLITICAL IDEALISM

" India's emancipation is of a far more profound consequence to the welfare of the world than perhaps of other countries, as our political idealism is far more comprehensive than that professed elsewhere. The fundamental conceptions of our political philosophy and practice, if they are to be steered clear through the storm of unpatented ideas that are raging about the Indian mentality at the present moment, guided by correct dynamic appreciation of our tradition, of our historical consciousness, *Sanchita Karma*, the abiding moral pose of our fundamental *Swabhava*, need, at the present juncture of our national destiny, a clear and perhaps a very brief and almost aphoristic enunciation, so that our present rulers, our intellectual Eurasians, and in fact the whole world which is groaning for freedom can understand and bear witness before the Maker of all things to the righteousness of our cause and also probably to our competence to lead political thought and action in the world.

" It is our peculiar fate and fortune that the new system or moral and mental philosophy that is to guide the world in the *Nava Yuga* (the new age)—the Post-Industrial Age—is to arise out of the present momentous conflict in our country, as this conflict, it is important to emphasise, is not to be understood as aiming at merely wresting power from the hands of the British, but as one wherein all conceivable ideas of

principle and conduct are fighting for supremacy in the governance of the universe. We must recognise that India now represents a *Triveni Sangamam*—a confluence of the three mighty streams that have so far nourished the life on this planet, namely, Hinduism (which includes of course Buddhism), Mohammadanism and Christianity—in the sacred waters of which the future humanity must bathe itself off all their past sins and emerge out with the new robes of righteousness, love and sacrifice into the *Krithayuga* that awaits them with Immortal Bliss.

“The European struggle and all the horrid agony and divine discontent prevailing in the world of today is not the frontier of the conflict, or rather to be more correct, the union of cultures that is going on in my country. The range of Indian consciousness is not merely national in the European sense of the term, not merely human either, but comprehends the entire universe which includes not only humanity but animality, vegetality and minerality, and according to our tradition, thirteen other worlds yet unconceived by the modern intellect. If we adopt the European national spirit at the present moment in our moral action, it is only to be understood as the intensive—and not the extensive—method of enabling the fruits of our action to benefit the entire universe. The new phenomenon that has now arisen in European moral practice, namely, the League of Nations (It must be stated here that it is so far political, of course, and does not extend to the entire moral sphere, but, I think, if at all it lives, it is potential of the widest import) appears to be the extensive form of the method. And this is as it should be, as Indian individuality is characterised fundamentally by subjective and spiritual pursuit, while that of the European is objective and material. And this is simply and significantly illustrated in our non-co-operation movement.”

“If the Punjab wrong, the Khilafat treachery and, if my indulgence is pardoned, the Chirala–Perala tragedy, and the almost incurable, interminable foreign tyranny announce themselves to our mind as the causes of our movement, they must be recognised as the *Upadana* (the Primal, Real) causes for starting

us on this national *Yoga Sadhana* under the guidance of Gandhi Maharshi, to achieve *Swarajya*, the final liberation. Non-co-operation is but the purificatory stage of the *Yoga*, the *Yama* stage, which is defined to consist explicitly of *Ahimsa*, *Astheya*, *Brahmacharya*, *Aparigraha* etc. Curiously and significantly enough that, in these days of Europeanisation of Indian mentality, such a scrupulous adherence to our traditional methods of *Sadhana* is issuing forth from Gandhi Maharshi's instinct and injunction shows that at last India has begun to discover her soul. The abiding *Dharmabeeja* (the Seed of Righteousness) is sprouting forth. Non-co-operation, with due deference to our Poet-Laureate,* is not 'a congregated menace of negation shouts and denial of love and life' and so forth, but constitutes *Anubhava* and *Sathwika bhava* which leads up to the fundamental aethos, *Rasa*, the Beautiful (one of the three theoretic forms of Reality) which leads up to the fundamental sentiments of the aesthetic organisation of the universe or the world process, viz., *Sringara* (Love). Non-co-operation embodies the abiding sentiments of *Khanditha Nayika* (the woman who snubs her Lord), one of the eight heroines mentioned in Indian dramaturgy. Perhaps *raudra* (the furious), *bibhathsa* (the detestable) and *bhayanaaka* (the terrible) Rasas await to be disclosed in God's wardrobe in the present drama of universal reconstruction. This non-co-operation in the case of these three Rasas may also constitute a *vyabhichari bhava* which nourishes them. A non-acquaintance with the traditional Hindu aesthetics alone should have instilled the doubt that non-co-operation may be an un-Indian method of furthering the cause of life. Gandhi Maharshi, our Guru, to be Purushottama, must be capable of *Navarasaspoorthi* (must comprehend the nine varieties of *Rasa*) as Sree Ramachandra was. The nine, the prime number, the only number of fundamental sentiments which produce, not in their totality, but in their severality, God in His fulness, must find their fullest consummation in the eventual evolution of my Guru's character; and in our utter self-surrender to our Guru, we believe in it.

*Tagore.

This, in brief, is my faith which colours all my utterances. The presentation of my ideal and method, therefore, needs illustration from our mythology, tradition and history, and not a mere despicable performance of the modern, economic, bourgeois, dilettante, philistine mood and its positive method, as typified by the demagogue of Trafalgar Square. It is not calculated to instil malignant patriotism nor provoke vulgar hatred of God's sons nor even a blatant contempt for egoistic follies of soul-less bureaucracies. My utterances aim at rejuvenating the atrophied centres of human compassion and pity for agony and misery, that requires constant adjustment and alleviation, and kindle faith and hope in the darkness of desperation and despondency. The Police that espy, the Magistrate that adjudicates, the Law that pants for vindication, are all alike, let me assure you, Sir, woefully ignorant and culpably untutored to comprehend, much less sympathise with, the form and movement of my thought and action. And this explains the unnatural and grotesque positions that placed the rulers and the ruled in their relations to each other. Law, I hold, cannot be the resultant of a conflict of interests and compromise of ideals, is not based on consensus, does not embody the power and pleasure of the Crown (as, in our view, the Crown merely executes God's will, nothing more, nothing less); but is *Swayambhu* (self-creating), the fundamental substratum of the world process as revealed through the supermen and their actions. Law is not what the modern parliamentarian makes, with his narrow bourgeois interests and party shibboleths, but is the utterance of the *Rishi* when he is the perfected instrument of the dynamic pose of the national soul. I recognise your law in so far as it is in tune with our national *Swadharma*. If you think I have offended your law, it is not to defy it in a spirit of scorn or contempt, but to provoke it to purge itself of its erratic form and evil import and attune it to that of our own. If you can strip yourself of your official austerity and self-insinuation as the defender of law, and for the moment become the man and the Irishman that you are, and view it from a high pedestal, you will see the truth of it and realise that

this accusation of offence is a mockery of God's Law. This offence, if you still hold it so, is capable of emancipating not only my country but also yours, and let the Britisher understand, his country too. I hold the method I have adopted in gaining our *Swaraj*, viz., non-co-operation, is not and cannot be, even in the hands of the most wicked votaries of it, violent as conceived to be a method of gaining political independence. Every war, in my view, can afford to be non-violent. India exists and shall exist as a racial unit in this universe, only to render war non-violent, and to teach erring humanity the true method of moral and social self-adjustment. India punishes herself for the redemption of the world.

Our moral ideal, our *Pravruthika Dharma*, does not consist of our own emancipation, and even at that, political emancipation alone, as life is a complex phenomenon in which all the apparently autonomous aspects, social, political, economic, moral and aesthetic, are interlaced and intertwined together in such a manner that action in one aspect will have momentous incidence in all the others; but directs itself towards the achievements of the emancipation of all existence from its phenomenal bondage, the realisation of every *Swarupa* (form and name) in strict consonance with its *Swadharma* (its abiding functions). In this view, this righteous war is essentially one species of educational process that enables everybody and everything to reach God with the employment of the only true method (the true Indian method) of appreciating the infinite variety of mental, moral and emotional constitution of all beings, so that every one grows to one's fullest spiritual stature, every one becoming a genius *Siddha*, with the achievement of the fullest originality and the complete realisation of one's own individuality. That is why, Sir, we are enjoined to throw in our lot with all struggles for freedom in this world, irrespective of time and clime, be it in Ireland or in Egypt or in Russia or in England. *Sarva bhuta hitam* (the well-being of all existence) is our ideal. Wherever it is trampled into the dust, we must get ready to sacrifice ourselves. And in so doing, we do not bargain with that bereaved nation or community for a territorial grant of an economic concession

for a baptism into our fold as a condition precedent to our allying ourselves with them. Thus you will see that we can make the cause of our Moslem brethren as our own only when they remain truly Muslim, fighting for their *Islam Dharma*. The Hindu-Muslim unity, judged from the Hindu standpoint, cannot be achieved and becomes a mere camouflage if Hindus and Muslims think of stripping themselves of their Hinduity and Mohammandanity to reduce themselves into a uniform eclectic hotch-potch, at the bidding of the so-called rationalistic training which results not in a real unity but a grotesque political pageantry. It is not the common political suffering that is to weld together the Hindu and the Muslim, like the Greeks of old during the Persian invasions, but the mutual respect, regard and love for each other's *Dharma* and the necessity of its individuated preservation that can and shall achieve it. *Swaraj*, therefore, means the preservation of Hindu *Dharma*, Muslim *Dharma*, Christian *Dharma*, Parsi *Dharma*, Sikh *Dharma*, in short, the *Swadharma* of all, and a co-ordinated federation of all, which are now being threatened with destruction by a positive godless philosophy, industrial anarchy and spiritual famine that beset the world at the present moment. We shall achieve it by *Nishkama Karma*, action without a longing for the fruit; and then, Sir, tell me where do hatred and contempt come in the performance of such an action?

“My amiable adversary, the Public Prosecutor, has laboured long to manufacture hatred and contempt and disaffection out of my speech towards the existing Government; but alas, he miserably failed to do so, but however, succeeded in showing up those (hatred, contempt, and disaffection) in the attitude of the Government towards my country. You know that I admitted the paragraphs and sentences to have occurred in the course of my speech, though ailing from a lot of infirmities; and I accosted you as to whether you yourself were disaffected over them. And when you replied that possibly you were not, and perhaps my audience, generally unlettered as they are, in your opinion, might have become so, I replied that if they, being acquainted with the language of my speech, my method

of argument, my mythological allusions, my vital touches, are thus affected, you, who are quite alien to all these, sitting in judgement over them notwithstanding, and however sympathetic, should have been more so. I also said the general uneducatedness which you impute to my audience is born of false apprehension. As you remember, I remarked that some of what we, Indians, learn from our mother's lap is imparted to an European youth in the post-graduate course, and I cited the idea of *karma* (in the European philosophical slang, the idea of 'metempsychosis') is a part and parcel of our volition even from our childhood, and this is engendered in our germ plasm by centuries of emotional and moral training in our previous births. It is futile perhaps to argue that we meant no disaffection, hatred or contempt, as you cannot perhaps comprehend our view of life that even a full-fledged sublime revolt against God as practiced by Ravana, Hiranayakasyapa and other Rakshasas is merely *Satru Sadhana* (the controversial, the oppositional, the belligerent method), in contrast with *Mitra Sadhana* (the expository, the devotional, and the self-surrendering method) leading up to final liberation (*Moksha*) as they all have got to. I have argued out everything of these paras complained against in my preliminary statement and I need not say anything further.

In conclusion, Sir, let me imitate the Indian schoolboy; nervous and trembling in the examination hall, addressing in his answer book an appeal to the humanity of the examiner, ignoring his questions to be answered, that he should be passed off to give him a lease of life and say that you, Sir, shall immediately inform your Government that they expedite the establishment of *Swarajya* by sending thousands of my countrymen into the Training Colleges of patriotism and self-fulfilment, your jails. Delay is dangerous. My Lord Sree Ramachandra has sanctioned the prosecution of three hundred millions of my countrymen in the Civil Disobedience Resolution at Hastinapura (Delhi), the cremation ground of many an Empire of egoism, the outskirts of Kurukshetra; and His Inspector-General, the Lord of Ramadandu, Mahatma Gandhi, awaits to execute it. My incessant prayer is that thus shall it be."

(*Swasti Sree Ramarpanamasthu!*)

CHAPTER XIII

CHIRALA-PERALA: ITS EFFECTS

To the superficial observer, the Chirala campaign ended in failure, because not only Gopalakrishnayya was clapped in jail and the people were coaxed into submission, by persecution, prosecutions, threats, burning of cottages (God knows by whom it was done!) and inducements through diplomatic offers and the award of at least one *Rao Saheb*—which all resulted in a return of the people to their homes, without achieving their main object, viz., the abolition of the municipality. But if the full truth of the matter has got to be told, the victory of the Government was but a pyrrhic one, for, not only was the extent to their success very limited as judged from the nature of the conditions which were finally agreed to between themselves and the people; and one of them, it is said, was that there should be no increase of taxes from the old Union level, but chiefly from the direct and indirect results which had accrued from the campaign, Chirala-Perala must be pronounced a distinct gain for Gopalakrishnayya and the nation, and as shown above, even the municipality was formally abolished subsequently by the Congress Government in 1938.

But before proceeding to sketch the main results of the movement, it will be instructive to narrate the chief causes which contributed to the failure of the campaign, as it was led in 1921.

First, the cause itself, from one standpoint, was a petty one. The issue was a very small one, being the abolishing of a municipality over a small town, it did not embrace even the wider political, that is, National Swaraj, though it helped politics and politics helped it too, to a considerable extent.

Secondly, jealousy of fellow-Congressmen in Andhra was another cause of the failure of Chirala-Perala. The leaders of the province were either lukewarm or became jealous of Gopalakrishnayya's popularity and his work.*

A chronic division of the people and the general absence of national character and solidarity was another cause for the failure of Chirala. "The most important cause why Chirala failed was the utter lack of comradeship amongst them. They were keeping on public life with artificial respiration. The tie of religion which united all the people together was absent. The people had multifarious divisions, quite discordant divisions. It was our social bondage that was perpetuating our political serfdom.

The decision of the Bardoli resolutions, whereby the non-co-operation movement in the country was suspended *sine die*, was a great shock to the Chirala campaign. Gopalakrishnayya went to jail in October 1921, when the movement was at its high tide; and in February 1922, the country was let down from the highest pinnacle to the bottom-most depths. And with the nation, Chirala also fell. The whole country was demoralised, and it spread to Chirala also. If there was no set back in the whole country, it is quite possible that Chirala could have held on for a much longer period. And even as it was, it is remarkable that it persisted for a full four months after the great 'Backing at Bardoli.'

Want of adequate funds was another cause. And here it is sad to reflect that, for all the organisation, propaganda, processions, evacuation, erection of new sheds, succour to the needy, meeting the prosecution charges, travelling expenses etc., not more than Rs. 10,000 could be forthcoming from the public, though the merchants and people of the place bore the brunt of it bravely. For a similar enterprise in Bardoli, Gandhiji actually set apart Rs. 10 lakhs in 1921; the Sikhs spent pretty large sums over their famous *Gurukabagh* affair; and in 1928, Rs. 2 lakhs was spent over the prelude to a

*See chapter XIX, his Trichinopoly speech.

no-tax campaign in Bardoli, and another two lakhs kept ready in case of need. The people of Chirala contributed over Rs. 8,000 for the Tilak Swarajya Fund of the Congress; but in return, the Provincial Congress would not grant even half of it for their campaign.

The above are some of the chief causes which led to the ultimate failure of the Chirala campaign. But we should now advert to a few aspects of the main significance of the struggle, because the Chirala movement, unlike many other political events, is not of an ephemeral interest merely; its effects are long-lasting and its significance must, therefore, be borne in mind by every student of Gopalakrishnayya's life and work.

Firstly, as Gopalakrishnayya himself was claiming, the movement was a psychological experiment in mass leadership. In his own words, like Sree Krishna of old, he had to be or rather exhibit in himself, 16,000 facets of his personality to satisfy all the 16,000 men, women and children, who chose to follow him.

Secondly, his was an attempt at running a parallel Government, on a limited scale of course. To understand its significance, it is necessary to go back to the circumstances which he had to face at that time. Thus, the country was in the grip of a foreign Government; the Congress pledged itself, under the leadership of Gandhiji, "to establish Swaraj in India in the year of grace 1921;" and Chirala-Perala was Gopalakrishna's contribution towards that great enterprise. In his own words, "During the eleven months there was no Municipality in Chirala, they had their own committees ruling." Later on, he reverted to the subject more fully and said that, if the Congress leaders had been sincere, they must aim at running a parallel administration in the country. Thus, writing to Mr. V. Jagapati Varma in 1927, he declared: "If these people really believed in democratic Swaraj, they should have gathered all those who entered the Legislatures on the Congress ticket into a new and independent Constituent Assembly and declared their determination to wage a final battle for freedom with the British Government. Before presenting

any 'National Demand' to the Government, we should first organise ourselves and then ask for an answer from the Government.

But let us see as to what had happened eventually. Whenever this question of a parallel Government was raised in the Congress circles, it was silenced on the plea of being "*ultra vires* of its constitution!" And ultimately, after the miscarriage of the "Quit India" campaign of Gandhiji, his chief disciple, Jai Prakash Narain, writing in 1943 from somewhere in India—for he had run underground at that time—opined that, having "destroyed the objects and means of administration of the foreign power and driven away its agents," the nation should have set up in their areas their own units of revolutionary Government and created their own police and militia. "Had this been done," Jai Prakash continued, "it would have released such an unprecedented volume of energy and opened up such a vast field for constructive work that the waves of the revolution would have mounted higher and higher, till—if the rising was countrywide—the Imperialist Power had been broken and the people had seized authority throughout the land." Thus, according to Jai Prakash, "The lack of efficient organisation and of a complete programme of National Revolution—these are the two causes of the downward course of the first phase of the present revolution." But, after repeated movements of "Direct Action," including Non-co-operation, Individual Civil Disobedience, Salt Satyagraha, Quit India and so forth, is it not most funny that Jai Prakash should have raised this question of a parallel Government in 1943? And what is the good of building a stable after the horse has been stolen; of digging a well after the house has been burnt?

Thirdly, Chirala afforded a unique example of communal adjustment among the warring communities of the present day India. There are many communities in the country; and, one by one, all of them are gradually requiring to send their own quotas, and sometimes even more, of members to the legislative, administrative and even judicial bodies, and thus "communal representation" has become a common cry in several parts of

the country. But it will be interesting to notice that, in his Chirala movement, Gopalakrishnayya had organised a Village Council or Panchayat wherein he gave representation to each one of the thirty communities existing in the place. The recognition of every existing community, as an ancillary to his wider synthesis of all existing faiths in the world, and with full freedom and equal opportunities for all the several communities moving in unison with common ties of interest and a feeling of oneness—this seems to be the spirit of the times and towards which the country is fast moving; and in this regard, Chirala-Perala had its own contribution to make.

The emergence of the Ramadandu as an inspired and religious mass-organisation, as suited to the present times of stress and strain, is a direct contribution of the Chirala campaign. For all movements of mass action, it is well-known, give rise to a great deal of unrest and bitterness which might, if not properly checked and controlled, tend to anarchy and chaos. And at such crises, the organisation of a band of people, inspired by a religious motive, and trained in a traditional manner, could easily be the best antidote for all ills. And in this sense, the Ramadandu was really a blessing to the country.

Among the indirect results which accrued from the movement, the following are noteworthy.

It produced a healthy, curbing effect on the actions of the bureaucracy, as witnessed from the withdrawal of the Repalle Municipality, whose creation was also proposed and opposed at that time.

It served as an object lesson to the people, of what a self-respecting community could do to resist the tyranny of an unsympathetic bureaucracy.

So far as Gopalakrishnayya was concerned, it took him to the topmost crests of fame and glory; and the "Hero of Chirala-Perala" was a household word in those days in Andhradesa, nay, even outside Andhra, his was the one Andhra name which was heard of or remembered even to this day.

But the most tragic part of this campaign was that it made Gopalakrishnayya a complete wreck in life, for his body was fully "consumed" by the fiery ordeals of this all-absorbing movement, with the result that he lost about 100 lbs. in weight—from 225 to 120—during that one year of campaigning, while the rigours of the jail-life which followed proved a veritable blessing; and he actually gained 30 lbs. in the Trichinopoly jail, even on his 'C' class diet and hard prison treatment!

CHAPTER XIV

SOME NON-CO-OPERATION POLITICS

We have lingered long on Gopalakrishnayya's Chirala episode, not because it was the best part of his life or achievement—to our mind, it is not worth half as much as his comradeship with his friends—but that, in this sterile age, it is easily the best we have produced in this country, and, what is more, it has valuable lessons to teach for the guidance of our future. But we should now proceed to a rapid survey of a few of the many political landmarks which adorned his life as a non-co-operation worker.

The first active work which engaged his attention along with that of others was the boycott of the Reformed Legislatures of the country; and he did very good work in that direction. It was probably his own zeal and determination which ultimately convinced even doubters like the 'Desabhakta'; and in his own Chirala centre, the only two votes that were polled in favour of Mr. J. Kuppaswamy Chowdary, who was an influential candidate, were those of his two clerks!

The elections were finished by November 1920; in December there was the Nagpur Congress. He soon completed his preparations for his Chirala campaign; and early in January 1921, he began with a few other leaders of Guntur a whirlwind tour in

several Andhra districts, propagating the Nagpur creed. On the 14th January, he presided over the Bapatla Taluk Conference ; on 21st, he presided over the Godavary District Students' Conference at Rajahmundry, where he appealed to the students to come out of their schools and colleges, sacrifice their studies for one year, and work for Swaraj. "All are bound to die one day," he declared, "whether of some epidemic or disease or otherwise. Then why not they sacrifice themselves in a noble cause, for the sake of their country?" "In this University of Life," he said, "of which God is the Chancellor, they should try to graduate by attaining *Moksham*...Europe has banished God out of its jurisdiction and He is reappearing in India in the form of Gandhi, even like Narasimha to destroy the bureaucratic Hiranyakasyapa. India can never find a more auspicious occasion than the present, better means than non-violent non-co-operation, and a greater leader than Mahatma Gandhi." Subsequently he addressed several meetings at Cocanada, Ellore, Bhimavaram, Guntur, Tenali and Bapatla, where he drew large numbers of students out of their schools and colleges. At Tenali, as a result of his preachings, we are told, "only 150 out of 1200 attended school ; and the school was closed for a week." Again, at the end of the week, the "attendance was miserably poor, and the strike was continuing." At Ellore, he was largely responsible for collecting a decent sum from the local Zamindars and merchants for founding the Gandhi Maha Vidyalaya, which is still continuing.

In March, 1921, we have already seen, he brought his Ramadandu to the Bezwada All-India Congress Committee meeting, where it won him laurels from every body. Early next month, Mahatmaji visited Chirala and gave his blessings to him and to the people of Chirala-Perala, and he even wrote articles in his *Young India*, in praise of both. The next few months were busy months for him, in connection with the Chirala exodus and after. On the 10th June, the Guntur District Conference which met at Ponnur congratulated the brave people of Chirala ; and as a mark of its appreciation of the services of their leader, alike to Chirala and to Andhradesa, they bestowed

upon him the title of "Andhraratna," by which he was popularly known ever afterwards.

In August 1921, Gopalakrishnayya presided over the Anantapur District Conference; in the same month, there was the Krishna *pushkaram* at Bezwada, where he delivered speeches on the religious sanction for war and also defending Gandhiji's cult of non-violence side by side.

In September, we have already seen, he went to Berhampore to attend the Andhra Provincial Conferences, where he delivered speeches which "certainly incited the people to prepare themselves for civil disobedience eventually," and thereby disturbed the placidity of a district which, in the words of its Collector, "had hitherto been spared such excess of political madness." His speeches invoked the wrath of the Government, who tried to silence him with a gagging order under Section 144, in "due disobedience" of which he spoke again; was arrested under Section 108 Cr. P. C.; put to trial and sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment by the Magistrate who would "much rather prefer his executing a bond and furnish security." But Gopalakrishnayya was determined to give security only to a "free Government" and therefore chose to go to jail.

Gopalakrishnayya's Berhampore speeches are important in more than one respect, and deserve some mention. He is reported to have urged the continuance of a separate Andhra Mahasabha besides the purely political conference every year, so as to enable the Andhras of various schools of thought to meet and discuss things in a non-political focus. He appealed for help for his Chirala campaign; congratulated De Valera, the Irish Republican leader and Zaghlul Pasha, the leader of Egyptian Independence, and pleaded for the recognition of his Ramadandu by the Andhra public. His appeal for the last was quite characteristic; and the thesis which he developed was briefly this:

Sree Ramachandra, his favourite God, was an Andhra, because He lived in the Andhra country for thirteen or fourteen

years; and even according to the modern laws of domicile, he must be deemed a 'citizen' of Andhra. And Ramachandra now lives, in his immortality of course, on the shores of the Godavary, in a village called Bhadrachalam. And according to tradition, as the true sovereign of the State is God Himself—Ramachandra is the real President of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; and, therefore, the Ramadandu, which was His own army, and which helped the Lord to rescue His Queen of Liberty from her exile in Lanka, should be the means for us also to bring back our freedom. Thereupon, a doubt was raised by some puritanic friends in the assembly, whether, Rama being a Hindu God and Ramadandu a purely Hindu organisation, it would not be resisted by the non-Hindus in the Congress, particularly the Muhammadans. On its merits, the question had already been disposed of by providing for a separate existence for the followers of the Muslim faith; but Gopalakrishnayya's reply that day took the position of our national unity much ahead of his former 'Live and let live' policy, and indicated a complete synthesis between the two communities. Thus confining himself to the Muslims, he said:

"Muslims are worshippers of the Moon, the Crescent; and Siva, who is but one of the forms of the Trinity, also wears the Crescent on his crown. Therefore, the Muslims who are Crescent-worshippers, are devotees of Siva who is but a part of Sree Ramachandra, the divine incarnation; and it follows that they are all Saivites or followers of Siva. And as proof thereof, he said, there was a pseudonym for Siva as 'Maulana Shankaralli,' and in the North-Western Frontier Province, the Muslims called the Prophet as 'Shanker-Khan'. (Whatever the truth of this, Prof. Macdonnel notices a remarkable fact, viz., that one of the Upanishads of the *Atharvana Veda* is actually called the Allah Upanishad.) Thus he went on describing the similarity between the worshippers of Siva and the Muslims, in respect of their martial instincts and traditions (as followers of Rudra or the God of destruction), and he even instituted a comparison between the beards of the Muslims and that of Siva (for whom

he invented one), who, out of delicacy for his sweet-hearts, Ganga and the Moon, ceased growing his tufts from the head and, instead, shifted them on to the chin; and the Muslims, therefore, as descendants of Siva, had taken to a round head and a flowing beard! Thus the Muslims also were entitled to form part of the Ramadandu—for both Saivites and Vaishnavites could become members thereof—while keeping, of course, their Islamic traditions intact. And if the interrupter had still any doubt, why? Is not His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad himself the Chief Trustee of Sree Ramachandra at Bhadrachalam?

Significant to his faith and professions, as leader of the Ramadandu, while the Police arrested him and took him to jail, Gopalakrishnayya commenced his journey with the famous Telugu song, పదవేళద్రాదికి - పాపిష్టిఘటమా! (on to Bhadradi, thou sinful pot!) with this song on his lips, and being about the first in those days to go to jail, it is no wonder that he converted jail-going into a veritable pilgrimage.

The one thing standing prominently in his jail-life was that it gave him the much needed rest for a year without which possibly he should have broken down much earlier. But when that much is said, it must be confessed that the treatment he received in jail was anything but what a man of his eminence and culture should have received. For instance, he was not allowed to read any newspapers or books; and what was worse, he could not, for a long time, take any paper or pencil with him. Several great men of the world have thus utilized similar opportunities for the lasting benefit of mankind; but in the case of Gopalakrishnayya, the Government refused even writing materials; and when they actually gave him a wretched pencil and a numbered notebook, they gave it niggardly, and even that came too late.

The main anxiety which he had in jail was, about his aged grandmother, who was then about eighty, and in one of his jail-musings, he expressed his concern for her thus: "My grandmother is very dear to me. She must have died, I think. My

uncle tells me she is about to, but I don't believe him. He is too sentimental; he wants to spare me the tidings. But I don't think, she is still living. She died. She did well! There is no use of living any more. She lived only for me. She can be happy only when I am by her. But it is impossible for me to be so any longer, at least for a long time to come. Are the British going to grant us Swaraj, to make one such old woman live? Until that event, I must be ever journeying to jail. And without me by her side, her life is wretched. No, the British are no such fools! It will be stupendous, monumental stupidity to grant us Swaraj or to allow me out of jail. Sree Ramachandra was the only solitary example who accomplished such sublime folly. He exiled His Queen to satisfy a slandering Dhobi!"

"Do women impede our work?" he asks in another reflection. After stating the one side of the question, wherein they seem to come in the way of man's work because they cannot repudiate this world, which is "their native soil," to promote whose interests they stand pledged, he discusses their chief life-purpose, as compared with man's. "If the masculine self-abandonment is roused to its sublimest effort, it would not falter from perpetuating a wholesale *Jeevahar*. But woman's supreme effort is *Jeevahar* itself. Her greatest achievement and sublimest is *Sati*. Indeed, there is Savitri, whose conquest and subjugation of Death is all-surpassing. Savitri returned, returned with the life of her lord, but she returned into immortality. Not into the infinite, purposive Love of Life, but into the infinite, inconsequential Life of Love. The menace of earthly separation is but an incentive to her supreme activity. All the sorrow of our women displayed at every turn in life is but a warning of the impending manifestation of their power for self-annihilation when it is needed. Their smiles are but the assuring and reassuring external ripples of this fundamental resolve of Love. Love that is self-annihilation or self-transcendence." "Women's destiny is thus identical with man's."

This and the other jottings of his at this time reveal that he must have grown terribly introspective, searching in his

mind, every bit of it, its strong and weak points, so as to fortify himself for the future. And one important line of this introspection was about the affairs of the country. For at the time he went into jail, he went with the fullest hopes about the eventual success not only of his Chirala-Perala but even of the bigger issue of Swaraj, and possibly, he hoped that he and his fellow-prisoners would be set free by an Act of the Swaraj Parliament! But while he was in jail, the 'Backing at Bardoli' gave a dead-set both to the nation, and his feelings on the same may be gathered from the following extracts from his later Madugula Address, which must be both interesting and instructive.

"The backing out at Bardoli was misunderstood. It had been suggested that either we should have gone on Mahatmaji's ultimatum or at least we should have come to some reasonable understanding with the Viceroy at Calcutta. True, Mahatmaji gave his ultimatum, and fixed a period of eleven days before which everything was to be settled satisfactorily to us. It was a terrible step. What was it that he relied on? Did he not know that unity was still non-existent at the time and untouchability remained unremoved? He knew that all the items of the constructive programme which was subsequently enunciated were still unfulfilled, but the whole phase of the movement had been quite different then from what it was afterwards. We had called upon the nation to unite purely on the political platform, putting by for the moment all differences, religious and social, which, we promised, would be swept off our life, the moment we got Swaraj, by a stroke of the legislative pen. Mahatmaji felt, I humbly opine, the nation did thus respond. The splendid success we had with reference to the Prince of Wales' Hartal, the almost delirious enthusiasm of the people which sent nearly 30,000 to the jails, the anxious readiness of the Government itself for peace and settlement, all these showed that the time has come. He felt his *Tapas* was approaching its consummation. He is the modern link in the chain of our sages and seers who accomplished super-human things for human weal by the aid of their own *Tapas*.

He felt his will had developed into that, that governs things on this planet. Did not the entire Indian National Congress explicitly, absolutely, trust at the moment to his will? He felt he had grown to the full spiritual stature he aimed at. If he willed Swaraj to his country, even the erstwhile despondent doubter, the bureaucracy, was inclined by the irresistible force of his righteous will towards yielding some such thing. There were ominous signs all round; the environment was portentous of something very catastrophic. He did the only thing possible for a true *Sadhaka*. He was right. He gave the ultimatum and gave his head as the price. But when the greatest gift one can afford was laid as offering, reality revealed itself in all its ghastly form. *Durnimittas* began to appear. All obscurities began to bore themselves and Nature began to warn. Chauri-Chaura was enough to still the greatest sacrifice. Mahatmaji began to think.

“There were, of course, two ways of thinking it out. One impels rushing on, despite the warning. The warning was only to test the strength of one’s resolution regarding one’s own offer. Why should one be daunted by the appearance of obstacles? Who impels me to take this extreme step of ultimatum? Surely, it is Providence; and Providence is not ignorant of realities. I am merely a *Nimitta* in His hands. Perhaps the interpolation of this obstacle, the unveiling of all this horrible unpreparedness of the country, is to test the transparency of me, His instrument. If I reflect these and not Him who is ever prepared, I will fail. I shall not do that. He impelled me thus far; and whence is this *Hridaya Daurbalyam*? If this is a warning*, wherefore is this delay in vouchsafing warnings earlier? No, be it what it may, come what may, my business is up, let me rush on! The words already escaped my lips that it is unworthy to live any longer in this country without Swaraj. I must go on.” This is one way.

* He often used to say that “Nature warned not Gandhi but Herself, whether she had chosen the proper instrument.” “The call came, but he (Gandhiji) was not ready.” “Nature warns not individuals, but Herself.” “Oh! for a Tilak or Das by the side of Gandhi at Bardoli!”

There is *Viveka* here too, but it is *Paaraloukika Viveka*. Here we are not judges. We are incompetent. We have not grown even an infinitesimal part in that path. We can, however, see that, if this line was followed, Mahatmaji would have even met the fate of all saints; he would have straight got into our *Guru Parampara*. Perhaps the nation would have lost its head, a great national *Jeevahar* would have resulted, and in the conflagration, we would have got Swaraj. Perhaps, and perhaps not!

“But the second one is the path of *Loukika Viveka*. ‘I am responsible for every step the nation is to take. I can never be too cautious. Here is a clear warning from Nature. Should I not mind it? Even the disgrace, scorn and sneering of the world are nothing before the act of saving a nation from an irrevocable fall. The nation will know bye and bye. I must now withdraw from the position. It may cost us anything, but it is necessary.’ This is the step he actually took. And Mahatmaji was the only one competent to take either of the steps. He chose the latter and the nation is grateful enough. Perhaps if he chose the first path, the nation would have been more grateful. But I emphatically deny the right of anybody who cannot assert of himself the same moral and spiritual height as Mahatmaji’s to judge in this matter. Suffice it to say, we are none the worse for the backing out at Bardoli. A voluntary withdrawal even in the hour of approaching triumph will render the succeeding attempt only the more sure. Judged according to human standards, I humbly believe, Mahatmaji was not at all wrong, and our faith in him shall tell us that he can never be wrong. The very fact that we hadn’t the nerve to repudiate him then and there shows it was right—he was there and it was right—what he did.”

His great hopes about his Guru, Gandhiji, achieving the impossible, i.e., attaining to divinity, however, had also been smashed* ere long; and while he was in jail, a clean slate was placed before his mind, and he utilised the occasion for

*“ గాంధీ పురుషోత్తము డనుకొన్నాను—ఉత్తమపురుషు డై నాడు.”

revolving within himself the nature and defects of the national movement in India; and, after much deliberation, he became fully convinced that our social unification must precede political freedom, and accordingly he formulated a new synthesis—the well-known ‘Brahmana Dharma’—which he proclaimed and even tried to propagate among his people after his return from jail.

CHAPTER XV

JAIL MESSAGE

Gopalakrishnayya emerged out of the Trichinopoly jail on the 2nd of October 1922—a completely changed man, a new man altogether, grown in bulk and weight, wiser now, more determined, not only disillusioned, but with an illumination in his soul, of which his external beard was the visible symbol, vending his way to the temple of Lord Ranganadha at Sreerangam on the shores of the Cauvery river.

It has been said of our great God, Sree Krishna, that He was born in jail; in fact, the jail is known as His birthplace; but apart from its historical veracity, it is of great significance that the Krishna of our story, as also that other ‘Krishna of our times,’ Sree Aurobindo Ghosh, were both creatures of our British jails, in the sense that their highest visions, their great messages and hopes, came to them while they were in jail; and both came out of it with a message of true freedom—of Eternal Religion—*Sanatana Dharma*—said Sree Aurobindo; of *Brahmana Religion*, said Gopalakrishnayya.*

Both these, *Sanatana Dharma*, and *Brahmana Religion*, literally the ancient, yet eternal faith and the religion of the seekers, that is, seekers after *Brahman*—are one and the same, the one being a subjective counterpart of the objective reality

*Lok. Tilak wrote his *Gita Rahasya* while in Mandalay jail.

of the other; and if we examine carefully the inspired utterances of our great men of this age, not only in India but all the world over, we will find that these two messages, of Sree Aurobindo Ghosh and Gopalakrishnayya, constitute the life-breath of our times, and never has a word more glorious escaped the lips of man in this age of materialism and this-worldliness than the message of *Sanatana Dharma*, which, Gopalakrishnayya said, is "Brahmana Religion." It was the privilege of an Aurobindo to have received that message of *Sanatana Dharma* in the Alipore jail in 1909 and to proclaim it to the world soon after his coming out of jail in his Uttarapara speech; and he set himself in Pondicherry, for more than forty years, to realise it in life and gave the fruits of his *Tapas* to the world. Likewise, it was Gopalakrishnayya's privilege to have perceived it independently, in greater flesh and blood perhaps, in its pristine beauty and simplicity, yet in its grandest glory and potentiality, and proclaimed the "Brahmana Religion" for a world seething with ignorance and untruth, ugliness and ungodliness; and he set himself to the mission of "Brahmanising all," that is, Brahmanising the non-Brahmins of India, nay, Brahmanising the non-Hindus of the world.

It was a great message, viz., of Brahmanising the world, which, in other words, means the creation of a new, universal religion; new, because none of the existing faiths of the world, Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammadanism, Christianity etc., have been able to stay the forces of material greed and aggressive self-interest; yet old because it is based on the traditions of the *Brahman*, the *Brahmins* and the *Brahmanas*, that is, on God, His seekers and the divine scriptures—of this ancient and spiritual country.

His coming out of jail was thus a triumph for Gopalakrishnayya, and it synchronised with the climax of his life's mission. For everything before it led to that supreme moment; and everything afterwards was an attempt at planting that great ideal in life—the ideal of Brahmanisation, i.e., the raising of every one to the level of a Brahmin, or, what amounts to the same thing, of putting every soul in this world on the path of

Brahman or the spiritual high path. And verily, now he became the prophet of a new age—the Brahminical Age.

The application of God or *Brahman* to life—or what is the same thing, the Brahmanisation of the world—yes, of the entire world,—of the *Brahmin* world, the non-Brahmin the Hindu world, the Islamic world; the Buddhist world, the Christian world; of the Eastern world and the Western world—and the raising of the whole and entire world without exception of race or religion, caste or creed, sex or clime, doctrine or dogma, to the level of a Divine Oneness,—this was the message of Gopalakrishnayya; and after Shankara, nothing so grand or glorious has ever been dreamt of, either in India or elsewhere. And, verily, after his release from jail, he breathed forth a call for a sort of Shankarization of the world!

This is not the place to expatiate more upon that message, and, for the present, suffice it to say that India's religion, which had its last integration and codification during the time of the Adi Shankaracharya, has since then, undergone a number of vicissitudes, and has become "a house divided by a thousand dividing walls;" but thanks to the teachings of several Acharyas in the country all this time, as well as owing to the coming of Islam and Christianity from abroad, underneath the jarring conflicts of the present day divisions and disintegration, we will also find a substratum of the Divine Truth, a knowledge of fundamental Oneness, a consciousness of the Advaitic indivisibility, not meekly acquiesced or blindly believed in merely, but deliberately inculcated and consciously developed; slumbering may be just now and lying ineffectual; but, under better auspices and under more proper and wiser direction, awaiting the grandest accomplishment, nay, constituting the only hope for the future of an erring, erratic, starving, struggling humanity in India, nay, in the entire world.

Brahmanism or *Sanatana Dharma*, as conceived by our sages and saints, is a universal religion, and it applies not to this country, race or time, but widens its scope with the widening of our mental horizon. It is the message of our hills and rivers,

scriptures and gods, saints and prophets, and extends in its ultimate range to the great infinitude itself. It is the message which India awaits to deliver to the world, and which the world is anxiously awaiting to receive from India. And in giving an effective and practical turn to the state of things as existing at present, which, undoubtedly, is the most critical not only of our but even of the world's history, lies the secret of the mission of persons like Swami Vivekananda and our Gopalakrishnayya, Mahatma Gandhi and Sree Aurobindo Ghosh.

CHAPTER XVI

ON BRAHMAN, BRAHMINS AND BRAHMANISM

In the last chapter, we have read of Gopalakrishnayya's jail message of Brahmanisation; but before we proceed, we should pause a while and dilate a little on that much abstruse and highly philosophic concept of *Brahman*, which is the bedrock of Brahmanism in India, and verily the goal of our religion, ancient, mediaeval and modern; in the past, present and in future.

Gopalakrishnayya himself, we have seen, had said in one of his jottings: "All beings run a race to *Brahman*... The true history of India relates to the dynasty of *Brahman*. *Brahman* rules from infinite to infinite, undisputed, absolute."

Prof. Mac Donnel, in his *History of Sanskrit Literature* says: "This word (*Brahman*) is the very epitome of religious thought in India. The two conceptions, *Atman* and *Brahman*, are commonly treated as synonymous in the Upanishads. But, strictly speaking, *Brahman*, the older term, represents the cosmical principle, *Atman* the physical principle manifested in man; and the latter as the known is used to explain the former as the unknown."

Prof. Max Muller says: "There is and there can be one reality only, whether we call it God, the Infinite, or the Absolute,

the unknowable *Brahman*. Whatever is, is one and the same in itself, without variableness or shadow of turning. And this is the *Brahman*. ”

Says Sree Aurobindo Ghosh : “ *Brahman* is the Self. All this verily is the *Brahman* (*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*). ”

“ *Brahman* is the giving ; *Brahman* is the food-offering by *Brahman*; it is offered to the *Brahman* who is fire ; *Brahman* it is which is to be attained by *Samadhi* in *Brahman* action. ” (*Gita*)

“ All being is the one *Brahman*, a divine movement of opening out from God and returning to God. ”

“ *Brahman* is the son of Devaki ;
Brahman is the slayer of Madhu Rakshasa ;
Brahman is Pundarikaksha ;
Brahman bears the Garuda Flag.
 Yea, verily, *Brahman* is Krishna... ” (*Sandhya*)

* * * *

If *Brahman* has been the idea of India, its seekers and worshippers in life are verily the *Brahmins*.

It has been said that a Brahmin is he who has attained to Brahminhood. But this view is erroneous, for, in that case, the aspirant becomes not a Brahmin, but *Brahman* itself— not a man, but God.

The other interpretation which Gopalakrishna himself had favoured, is that every seeker after *Brahman* is a Brahmin.* And in India, at any rate, as *Brahman* is the goal of everybody, therefore, all are Brahmins.

“The only word that can be found in the *Swasthi* (our National Anthem), declared the Andhraratna, is Brahmin. The national prayer does indeed contain the mention of the name of the race or nation everywhere. Brahmin is the word to describe our name. Brahminhood has ever been an aspiration. A Brahmin is not he, as popularly declaimed, who

* బ్రహ్మస్వేపకుడు బ్రాహ్మణుడు.

attained to *Brahman*. In that case, he lives in his own right. He gets above society. He sheds all *Sangnya* (sign and name). But a Brahmin is he who aspires after *Brahman*. He retains his name until he achieves the end. Everybody can aspire after *Brahman*, and he whose conduct of life is so directed, can merit the name. The fond hope of the race has ever been to Brahmanise itself completely. There were unmistakable evidences in our early historical traditions when thousands of others have been brought into the Brahmin fold. Even in modern times, in places where people professed the original faith, the aspiration still lingers. For instance, in Andhra and South, there are those who call themselves 'Deva Brahmanas' and 'Viswa Brahmanas.' "Even the oriental scholars (Europeans) of the days of the East India Company used to call our religion 'Brahminism,' and our culture 'Brahmanical culture'." (*Sadhana* 3)

"A name must be true, significant, historic, and beautiful. Indeed there are already many *Brahmanas*, viz., *Deva Brahmanas*, *Viswa Brahmanas* etc. And if the new philosophy of life which should govern the future public and private relations in our society must be the realisation of the fundamental oneness of all existence, the suitable name cannot but be Brahmin, for *Srutis* and *Smritis* alike declare that a Brahmin is he who pursues this ideal. That is the traditional word." (*Sadhana*, 4)

Brahma, in India, has been our *Prajapathi* or Creator God; *Brahmanas*, our ancient scriptures; Brahmins, the highest ideal in society; *Brahmi*, the most ancient script; *Brahma-vivaha*, the most respected form of marriage; *Brahmopadesam*, the revelation of the highest truth; *Brahma Jijnasa*, the noblest pursuit of knowledge; *Brahma-garbha*, the most divine knot; *Brahmi-muhurtha*, the divinest part of the day; and verily, *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*. All that exists is *Brahman*. Even in the West* they say: "We have Abraham to our father" (St. Luke, 3-8); and their most famous press in physics is the *Brahma* press!

*

*

*

*

* *Brahma*, *Abraham* and *Ibrahim*—The consonantal sounds in the three how identical they all are!

Brahmanism is the religion of the Brahmins, or the worshippers of *Brahman*, i. e., of the people of India — nay, of the world at any rate, of those who accept the ideal as the alpha and omega of our life.

CHAPTER XVII

RISE AND GROWTH OF BRAHMANISM

It is important to note here, however briefly, the origin, and growth of this Brahmanism in India.

The current theory of the Central Asian origin of human civilization, according to which the original home of humanity was somewhere in Central Asia, and whence there were two streams, viz., the Eastern and the Western, seems to be unfounded; and equally discredited now is Lokamanya Tilak's attempt to fix up the 'Home of the Vedas' as still further North, in the Arctic regions. And, as a recent scholar has so aptly put it, "Aryavarta is the original home of the Aryans," and of their scriptures and gods, including the Vedas.

Ancient Brahminical life, as it was lived in the earliest Vedic ages, will be found embedded not only in the Vedas and the Brahmanas and Upanishads, but also described in great detail in the *Srauta* and *Grihya* Sutras, dealing respectively with the ritualism of the sacrifices and ceremonies applicable to the domestic life of man and his family, from birth to death and into its great beyond even. And from these, it is possible to form an idea of the sort of life prescribed by our ancients for an average citizen of those days.

The *Srauta* rites (*Srauta* is literally based on *Sruti*; and *Sutra* is a clue or thread), as described in the *Srauta* Sutras of a latter day period, were fourteen, being divided into two groups of seven each, viz. *Havis* or oblations and *Soma-yajnas* or sacrifices, which included the *Agnihotra*; *Darsa-purnamasa*; *Chaturmasya*;

Agnistoma (Praise of Agni); *Agnichayana* (piling up of the fire-altar lasting for a year) etc. They were all intended for the advanced followers of the Brahmin fold, and were always accompanied by three or more sacred fires, involving an elaborate ritualism and the functioning of several high priests and often lasting over long periods, some times even up to six years.

The *Grihya*, that is, domestic ceremonies, on the other hand, which are described in the various 'Grihya Sutras' (laws of household life), deal with the domestic life of a man and his family. For the performance of these rites, no elaborate priest-craft is required; they are much simpler in ritualism; and only the domestic (*Avastya* or *Vaivahika*) fire was sufficient. Forty Samskaras or sacraments are described, as being performed at various epochs in life. "The first eighteen are bodily sacraments, from birth to marriage, and the remaining twenty-two are sacrifices. Eight of these, the five daily sacrifices (*Maha yajna* that is, to *Brahma*, the creator; to the *Pitris* or the manes; to the *Devas* or gods; to the *Bhutas* or the beings; and to *Atithis* or guests); and some other 'baked offerings' that is, *Paka yajna*, form part of the *Grihya* ceremonies of a *Grihasta*, the rest belonging to the *Srauta* ritual.

The first of these domestic rites is the *Pumsavanam* or ceremony aiming at the birth of a son. Then there are the *Jatakarma* or birth-rites; the *Namakarana* or 'name-giving' (Two names were given, one being the secret name, known only to the parents and the other for common use); the *Chudakarma* (hair-dressing in the third year); the *Upanayana* or initiation into the Vedic path; pilgrimage; marriage; funeral rites, etc.

Of these, the *Upanayana* (or "leading to the teacher" was the most important and means literally the additional or third eye, which stands for spiritual insight and vision. Man, by birth, is a *Sudra*; but through *Upanayana*, he is initiated into the mysteries of the Divine or higher knowledge, and he becomes the *Dwija*, or 'twice-born', because he has lost his former darkness, and is put into the path of God—*Brahmacharya*. The *Manu Smriti* has an excellent description of this *Upanayana Karma*, from which the following is extrated.

“The Brahmin shall have his *Upanayana* in his eighth year; the Kshatriya in his eleventh; and the Vysya in his twelfth (2-3); but they may also take their initiation between the ages of 5 and 16; 6 and 21; and 8 and 24 respectively. The most precocious may take the earlier year; but after the later limit, they become unfit for initiation and are, therefore, condemned by the wise (37-39). Among Brahmacharis, the Brahmin shall wear an *Upa-vitam* or cotton thread; the Kshatriya, a hempen cord; and the Vysya, one made of goat's wool. Rules are prescribed for their dress; waist-cord; handstick; and their *Bhiksha* or going the rounds for their daily food, and their mode of eating after surrendering it first to the teacher. For girls, marriage is the initiation sacrament; service to the husband is equivalent to the boy's living with the Guru; and the conduct of domestic duties to the ritual of the sacred fire (69). The Guru shall first teach his pupils cleanliness and *Acharam*, *Agnihotra* and *Sandhya* (69). The pupil shall begin and end his lessons with the recital of the sacred *Aum* (74), which is the sum-total of A, U, M (the three letters respectively which commence the Rig, Yajur, and Sama Vedas). Likewise, the Creator *Brahma*, assorted three words from the three Vedas; and he who recites this Rik with that one word *Aum* attains all the virtues of having read all the three Vedas (75-78). A *Dwija* who recites Gayatri a thousand times daily sheds all his sins, as a serpent leaves its outer skins (79). The Savitri with “Aum” constitutes the face of the Veda (81); and he who diligently worships the Gayatri for three years continuously faces *Brahma*—he becomes *Brahman* himself (82).

“The one word *Aum*,
Is supreme *Brahman*;
The control of *Prana*
Is gratest *Tapas*;
There is no *Mantra*,
Higher than Savitri;
To utter Truth
Is higher than silence.” (83)

The Paka yajnas and Vidhi yajnas are not worth a sixteenth part of Gayatri; the Brahmin, whether he does these Yajnas or not, if he recites the Gayatri, then he is blessed (88). The Guru shall not give the Gayatri to an unworthy disciple, better it dies with him; never shall he sow its seeds on barren soil; for the Goddess of Knowledge shall lose her virility if bestowed upon the undeserving or the unfit (113-114). The *Dwijā* was born first from the womb of his mother; but his second birth is in his *Upanayana*; to him Savitri is the new mother and the Acharya (teacher) is the spiritual father (169-170). Till the Veda gives him his rebirth (through *Upanayana*) a Brahmin is but a Sudra in rank (172). The *Brahmachari* shall do these things (176); he shall *not* do those (177-181); he shall get flowers for worship and beg out his meal (183 sq.) and learn his lessons and live with his Guru in the prescribed manner (184-244). The pupil shall not offer any gifts to his Guru before he finishes his course; but after finishing it he shall ask for permission to marry and offer his Guru whatever he desires (245). Lands or gold, cows or horses, umbrellas and shoes; seats or rice, fruits or clothes—these shall please the Guru much (246). If the Guru dies, the pupil shall serve the Guru's son or wife, or at least the fire-place where the Guru performed his 'homas' (248). The Brahmin who spends his *Brahmacharya* thus will attain to the higher Lokas; he shall not be born again on this earth." (249)

The sacrament of marriage, which, even more than the *Upanayana*, is the most important of these domestic rules, is thus described. "The *Panigraha* or taking of her hand placed the bride in the power of her husband. The stone on which she stepped was to give her firmness. The several steps which she took with her husband and the sacrificial food which she shared with him were to inaugurate friendship and community. Future abundance and male offering were indicated when she had been conducted to her husband's house, by seating her on the hide of a red bull and placing upon her lap the son of a woman who had only borne living male children. The God most closely connected with the rite was *Agni*; for the husband led his bride three times round the nuptial fire *Parinaya* is "leading round"—

and the newly kindled domestic fire was to accompany the couple throughout life. Offerings are made to it and Vedic formulas pronounced. After sunset, the husband leads out his bride, and as he points to the Pole star and the star Arundhati, they exhort each other to be constant and undivided forever” (Prof. Mac Donnel).

“Permission to marry a daughter was asked from her father by the suitor through the mediation of an intimate friend. The wedding was celebrated in the house of the bride’s parents, whither the bridegroom, his relatives and friends came in procession. Here they were entertained with the flesh of cows slain in honour of the occasion. Here the bridegroom took the bride’s hand and led her round the nuptial fire; and on the conclusion of the wedding festivities, the bride, anointed and in festal array, mounted with her husband a car adorned with red flowers and drawn by two white bulls and conducted in a procession to her new house.” (Rig Vedic Marriage Rites)

The following marriage-hymns are from the Rig Veda :

To the Bride : “I grasp thy hand that I may gain good fortune,
“That thou mayst reach old age with me, thy
husband;

Bhaga, Aryaman, Savitri, Purandhi,
The Gods have given thee to share my
household.”

To Agni : “To thee, O Agni, first they led
Bright Surya with the bridal throng,
So in thy turn to husbands give
A wife along with progeny.”

Benediction : “Here abide; be not divided;
Complete life’s whole allotted span;
Playing with your sons and grandsons;
Rejoicing in your own abode.”

Last Stanza : “May all the Gods us unite;
May waters now our hearts entwine;
May Matariswan and Dhatri
May Deshtri us together join.” (Mac Donnel)

"The wife was subject to the will of the husband—was *Griha Patni* of the house and participated in the offering of sacrifices. She controlled the servants and slaves and also the unmarried brothers and sisters of her husband. In the Yujurveda, it was customary for the sons and daughters to marry in the order of their age, but the Rigveda more than once speaks of girls who remained unmarried and grew old in their father's house."

The husband should endeavour to please his wife and mate with her during the *Ritu* period, barring prohibited days; and he shall be deemed a *Brahmachari*. "Where the women are held in honour, there the gods are pleased; where they are not treated properly, all the good deeds of the household will be of no avail." Therefore, "Honour thy women with good clothes and rich jewels." (Manu)

In the earliest Vedic times, social organisation was very much simple, because occupations were little differentiated; and every man was both a soldier and a civilian. But gradually, society became more and more complex; vocations tended to become numerous and hereditary; population spread over wider tracts of territory; and the religious ceremonial also was increasing in complexity, its success growing more dependent on correct performance. The priests had, therefore, to devote all their time and energies to the carrying out of their religious duties and the handing down of the sacred tradition in their families. Likewise, the necessity also arose for something in the nature of a standing army to repel sudden attacks or quell risings of the subjects; and the nucleus thereof was supplied by the families of the chiefs of lesser tribes who had amalgamated under some military leader. The agricultural and industrial sections of the population were thus left to follow their pursuits uninterrupted and thus gradually the three main classes of society became more and more separated, an evidence of which we meet with, for the first time, in the Rigveda, in the famous hymn known as the *Purusha Sukta*, where the Brahmin is said to have arisen from the face of the *Brahma*; the Kshatriya from the arms; Vysya from the thighs; and the Sudra from His feet. (x. 90)

The duties of the Brahmins were laid down by the law-givers, and they were most trying and arduous. The highest of them was stated by Manu thus: "In your own soul perceive the supreme soul in all beings; and acquire a perfect equanimity of mind, towards them all." "The Brahmin shall surrender even the Vedic rites of *Yajna* etc., if need be; but he shall endeavour always to realise himself through meditation, contemplation, sense-control, and *Vedabhyasam*; for these shall lead him surely unto *Moksha*." (12-92) "Realise the outer sky in the inner horizon of thy belly; in thine inner breath, the outer *Vayu* (wind); in the lustre of thine eyes and the fire of thy stomach, those of the Sun and of *Agni*; in the internal waters of thy body the outer waters of the seas; the outer worlds in thine inner; the Moon in thy mind; the *Disas* in thine ears; *Vishnu* in thy feet; *Hara* in thy strength; *Agni* in thy speech; *Mitra* in thy *Payu*; and *Prajapati* in thine *Upasta*."

The life of a Brahmin is divided into four stages or *Ashramas*, viz., the *Brahmacharya* or the period of study under a Guru; the *Grihasta* or the householder's life; *Vanaprasta* or the anchorite's retirement; and *Sannyasa* or the life of a religious mendicant. Each of these stages, again, had clearly defined and well-regulated rules of conduct and each was graduated not only to fulfill its own purpose, but to lead gradually on into the next, and the whole life was thus prescribed as a steady progress through the three human pursuits—*Purushardhas*—viz., of *Dharma*, *Ardha* and *Kaama*, towards the final attainment of *Moksha* or the perfect identity of the one with the indivisible, eternal, *Brahman*.

And what is this *Mukti* or *Moksha*?

Says the Sarvasaropanisad: *Moksha* is freedom from bondage (*Bandha*).

And what is bondage?

The same Upanishad defines bondage in these words: "There are the spirit or the soul (*Atma*) and the body (*Deha*) which is non-spirit. And bondage is that which imagines the body (which is not self) as the self, and loves it as such; and thereby brings on error to the soul."

The Kshatriya, Vysya, and the Sudra, each manifesting a different type of human aspiration and endeavour, formed with the Brahmin the four sides of the Indian society; and the whole scheme, according to Sree Krishna, the latest of the great Avatars, was based on the principle of *Guna* (inner quality) and *Karma* (outer action) of each *Jeeva* or individual.

One word more, and it is about the comparative elasticity of the system as it had existed originally. Thus, on the one hand, there was no sanction here for any fifth caste or the *Panchama*, and no practice of untouchability. The Rig Vedic *Purusha Sukta* had mentioned only four Varnas, viz., the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vysya and Sudra. Manu specifically declared, *Naasti Varnastu Panchamah*—there is no fifth caste. Sree Krishna, in the famous sloka of the *Bhagavad Gita*, mentions only four Varnas as His creation :

*Chaatur Varnyam Maya Srishtam,
Guna Karma Vibhaagasah.*

Nay, the same sloka prescribes *Guna*, that is, inner quality, and *Karma*, that is, outer actions as the two criteria of this social division. And throughout our history, we find that this elasticity has been recognised and adopted in actual practice. Thus, Viswamitra, by dint of his *Tapas*, attained the status and position of a *Brahma Rishi*, though he was a Kshatriya by birth. Bharadwaja, though Brahmin-born, went into adoption into the Kshatriya family of the Bharatas, in order to keep up the perpetuity of the ruling race. Among the Gotras of the present day Brahmins, we find there are several of them having Kshatriya Rishis— e.g. those of the Haritasa Gotra have got Haritasa, Ambareesha and Yavvanaswa—all of Kshatriya origin. Mixed marriages were recognised, though those of the *Pratiloma* variety were discouraged. Eating of oil-cakes prepared by the Sudras by a Brahmin were permitted by Manu, and the Gayatri Upanishad prescribes the reading of the Upanishad as a *prayaschitta* for eating undesirable things or along with undesirables. *Apankti bhojanat puto bhavati—Abhakshya bhojanat puto bhavati*. As for interchange of one's *Varna*, the Thandya

or Praudha Upanishad attached to the Sama Veda is said to contain certain "Vratya Stomas" which are sacrifices meant for enabling the non-Brahmins to enter the Brahminical fold. The *Maha Bharata* gives a number of instances where members of a lower caste were converted to a higher one, including the Brahmin caste, through river baths etc. And, within the historical period, there is the unique instance of what Justice Pargiter describes as *Kshatropetaah Dwijaatayah*, and actually we read that the founders of the four fire-born races—*Agni-Kula*—viz., the Pratiharas, the Chahamanas, the Chalukyas and the Paramaras, "sprang from the fire-altar of sage Vasishtha on Mount Abu," tradition further placing them among foreigners, who, by virtue of a *Homa*, qualified themselves to Kshatriyahood, and were given a caste and a mark and even some dynastic names dating back to Rama or the Pandavas. And the part played by these Rajaputs in meeting the Muslim incursions in our subsequent history is well-known.

Such is the system which flourished in India for ages; and gradually it spread across the length and breadth of the continent, making conquest after conquest, and adding power and glory to the Kingdom of God or *Brahman*, as well as to its worshippers. But, in course of time, about two thousand and five hundred years ago, we find the evening of Brahmanism had set in; Brahmins became deteriorated in calibre and culture; social purity declined; and men became selfish and women ignorant. And out of these conditions, there arose a Protestant form of India's religion, known as Buddhism or the religion of the enlightened, from its founder Gautama Buddha, or Gautama, the illumined.

CHAPTER XVIII

DECAY OF BRAHMINISM

The system which thus arose and grew up in India through ages became degenerate and corrupt in course of time ; and among the causes which led to this decay were the arrogance and tyranny of the priestcraft ; the growing superstition and increasing ritualism ; and the sufferings of our women and the Sudras from both of whom the Vedic Light was denied. As a result, during the seventh and sixth centuries before Christ, there arose in our country over sixty protestant systems, out of which Jainism, Buddhism and the Charvaka school have stood out prominently. Among them, Buddhism developed as a powerful rival to Brahminism in India, nay, it spread to other countries also ; and though vanquished ultimately in its homeland, is still surviving in a number of countries abroad.

Buddhism started at first with a few ; but it soon spread among the ruling classes especially, and gathered disciples from the high and the low of the community. During the reign of the great Emperor Ashoka Maurya, it became the State religion of the land and began to spread to other lands, and in a couple of centuries, through the zeal of the rulers and the labours of the monks, it spread to Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, China, Indo-China, Malaya, Central Asia and Japan, and conquered the hearts of their peoples, nay, it largely influenced, through its fable and philosophy, even the religion of the Christ which arose in Palastine and spread to the West. Thus, for a thousand years and more, India became the holy land—the land of the enlightened Buddha—of the world, as may be witnessed by the stream of pilgrims who flocked here from China and other countries, of whom Fa-Hian and Hieuen-Tsang are the most famous, and by the thousands of the pagodas, statues, idols and stupas

dedicated to the Buddha and still surviving both in India and in Eastern and Central Asia.

Buddhism, indeed, was the protestantism of India's religion; but as all such protestant forms, it lacked the inner fire of self-purification, and served only as a reactionary movement in the long run instead of as an integral synthesis. Thus, in respect of its fundamental faith, while the *Dhammapada* became a new scripture, the sanctity of the Vedas went down gradually in the estimation of its followers. While the Buddha himself ascended to an Avatarhood, the divinity of the original gods and goddesses became dimmed somewhat. And while our women and the Sudras rose up in social status and cultural advancement, instead of a synthetical harmonisation of the entire society, a sort of rivalry grew up between the old faith and the new; and when, in due course, the torch of knowledge faded away, the rulers became feeble and inept, corruption and vice increased, and the people became degenerate and ignorant, there arose a powerful reformer in the person of Sree Adi Sankara (8th century A. D.), who, before he reached the age of thirty-two, performed feats of a prodigy not only in the sphere of intellectual thought and philosophical speculation, but even in practical action and organisation, he tried to meet the onslaughts of his religious opponents and defeated them in many an open combat and set himself to a vigorous reshaping of the existing law, society, ethics and philosophy of the land, and took back Hinduism to its pristine purity and original idea of the "One Brahman—the one Brahman" and revived the lost respect for the Vedas and Vedic lore. Sankara himself wrote commentaries on the Brahma Sutras, the chief Upanishads and the Gita; restated the ancient gospel of *Advaita*; synthesised the six systems of worship then in vogue; trained disciples; founded mutts or monasteries in the four corners of the country—at Puri in the east, Sringeri in the south, Dwaraka in the west, and Badarinath in the north; and in a very short time, he converted masses of mankind into the Brahminical fold. Since the days of the ancient seers, there was none who, by his purity of character, forcefulness of personality, brilliance of intellect, capacity for organisation

and, above all, an adamantine will and purpose to reshape the society on the principles of *Sanatana Dharma*, could compare with the great Sankara, and no wonder that he moved in the land like a tempest, and swept it off of its anaemia.

To understand the inwardness of the work of Sankaracharya, it is necessary to remember that, like Swami Vivekananda and our Gopalakrishnayya, he not only lived for a brief lifetime only, but then, the times were much different from ours. For India is a land of vast distances; and in those days, there were few good roads or canals, no railways or motor cars, and no steamships or aeroplanes, and the major journeying had to be done mostly on foot and across pathless jungle. Then again, the country was not even one politically, and there were several kingdoms and sub-kingdoms, following many creeds and faiths, and most of them paying homage to the Buddhist cult. Under such conditions, that Sankara could cover personally the north and south, east and west of the country more than once, nay, in every place wherever he went, could inflict crushing defeats on his opponents, and thereby conquer priests, conquer people, conquer kings, and conquer kingdoms to a new Brahminical faith, which was new because it differed so widely from the then existing Buddhist order, yet old because it was based fundamentally on the ancient Vedic ideals and principles and all this, before he died in his thirty-second year;—it must, indeed, sound a miracle. But the most outstanding part of Sankara's work—and his lasting contribution to the world's thought and life was his *Advaita Tattva—Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma* (The Reality is one, and indivisible. It is fundamentally one, though the wise describe it by various names). *Tat twam asi* (Thou art that) *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am the Brahman). In fact, the four Vedas and the "Maha Vaakyas" or great axioms which he entrusted to the care of his four mutts respectively were:

Aamnaaya	Veda	Maha Vakya
1. Puri	Rig Veda	Pragnanam Brahma
2. Sringeri	Yajur Veda	Aham Brahmasmi
3. Dwaraka	Sama Veda	Tattwamasi
4. Badarika	Adharvana Veda	Ayatmatma Brahma

And his famous sloka prescribing non-discrimination and fundamental compares oneness most favourably with any other description of the gospel of equality by our constitutional Pandits anywhere in the world. Thus, while Article 15 of our Constitution speaks of such equality irrespective of race or religion, caste or creed, sex or place of birth or of any of them, Sankara's recipe was :

*“ Yasyaanthah Naadi Madhyam,
Nahi kara charanam, Naama Gotram, na Sutram,
No Jaathih, naiva Varnah,
Nabhavati Purusho, na Napumsam nacha Stihreeh,
Naakaaram, Naivakaaram,
Nahi Jana Maranam, Naasti Punyam na Paapam
Thattwam no, Thattwamekam,
Sahaja samarasam, Sat-Gurum,
Tham namaami.”*

that is, “Beginningless, endless,

And without even a middle ;
Sans hands or feet, sans name or *Gotra* ;
Without race, without caste ;
Neither male nor female nor neutral neuter ;
Free from birth, free from death ;
Beyond reach of virtue or sin ;
And without any *Thattwa*,
But of self-effulgent harmony ;
To such a *Sat-Guru*,
I bow.”

A greater definition of universal oneness, it will be difficult to find, indeed, in the tablets of human thought anywhere in the world.

This is not the place to expatiate more upon the great message and work of the *Adi Sankara* ; and, for the present we must stop this story of India's religion with just one more remark, viz., that, after *Sankara's* time, chiefly owing to his teachings, as well as through the endeavours of the other *Acharyas* in India, as well as due to the coming of Islam and Christianity into the

land, the principle of a Divine Oneness—fundamental unity of mankind—of a real spiritual democracy—has percolated the entire strata and substrata of our society; and underneath the jarring conflicts and apparent disunity among our people, we will find a substratum of the Divine Truth, a knowledge of the fundamental unity of mankind, a consciousness of *Advaitam*, not meekly acquiesced or blindly believed in, but deliberately inculcated and consciously developed; slumbering, it may be just now, and lying ineffectual and inert, but, under better auspices and under more proper direction, awaiting the grandest accomplishment, nay, constituting the only hope for the future of an erring, erratic, starving and struggling humanity in India, nay, in the whole world.

CHAPTER XIX

SOUNDING THE GONG

Times have changed; and a new “Sankarization of the world” has now become the current theme of human affairs. And no wonder that not only a Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi and an Andhraratna Gopalakrishnayya in India, but a Dean Inge and H. G. Wells, Prof. Toynbee and Chancellor Borsodi in the West have begun to call for a new world-synthesis—universal religion call it some, and others urge a “spiritualisation” of the world. And among all these, our Gopalakrishna has got his own place and contribution, big or small it matters little.

Sankara's great contribution to the realm of human synthesisation has been noticed already. Thus he revived the gospel of the Advaitic thought, and synthesised into it not only the main principles of the Buddhistic ethic—in fact, the Buddha himself was elevated into Avatarhood and made the ninth incarnation after Krishna—but recognised even the six

systems of adoration which were prevalent at that time. As a result, Buddhism ceased to be a force in the land of its birth; and Brahminism once more thrived everywhere. For propagating his theology and religious practice, Sankara also founded four mutts in the four corners of the country; but unfortunately, he was not spared to witness the growth of his new order or even the consolidation of his great doctrine. In due course, fresh developments arose, and new forces were generated, both favourable and otherwise. Thus, the four mutts in India drifted apart, and there was no central controlling authority to direct or advise them. Outside India, Buddhism still continued to live and flourish, in Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, China, Japan and other countries, while, from the West, Islam and Christianity crossed our frontiers and converted crores to their faiths, especially from the weaker sections of the fold. Among the Hindus themselves, both on account of the inner urge of the Sankarite *Advaita*, the teachings of the several Acharyas and the *Bhaktimarga* of the numerous saints and devotees who followed him as well as due to the impact of the forces of democracy—Liberty, Equality and Fraternity—from outside, there has been a steady awakening and a new consciousness of human dignity and self-respect among those who were content previously to be mere servants, if not slaves. Thus, among our women and the Sudras, the numerous non-Brahmin communities and the untouchables, there has come up an upsurge and a spirit of self-assertion, which, he who runs can notice everywhere, and which can be ignored by our leaders only at the peril of the nation, nay, of *Dharma* itself, but on the other hand, which, if conserved and properly directed, is bound to prove a new strength to the society, provide a fresh yeast for a new bread so to say. During the same time, the last few centuries especially, owing to the discoveries of science and the growth of international commerce and communication, man's horizon has become widened so far at least as the four shores of the Arctic, Antarctic, Atlantic and the Pacific in our classical *Chatussagara Mantra*. And with the bursting of the Atom, even the Upanishadic *Sutra* of *Ano raneeyaan Mahato maheeyaan* has become a pragmatic formula, which no one can ignore or fail to utilise in practical life.

Thus, a new synthesis of life has become a human need—a world necessity. Gopalakrishnayya, was indeed dreaming of such a consummation even during his stay in Britain. And while in London, in August 1915, he told the late Lt. Col. T. S. Sastry, that, one day, he would make the whole world akin and convert all into Brahminism. And after his release from jail, he began to set himself, in pretty right earnest, to “sound the gong and summon the faithful” to a common social embrace—the concord of a neo-Brahminism as he called it. And the story of Gopalakrishnayya in the later part of his life is the story of that gong and of that summoning.

CHAPTER XX

POST-JAIL UTTERANCES

Gopalakrishnayya, we have seen, was released from the Trichinopoly jail at 12-45 noon on the 2nd day of October 1922. A message to the *Swarajya* relating thereto reads “All leaders, including Messrs C. Rajagopalachari, V. V. S. Iyer, Dr. Sankara Iyer, E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, K. Santhanam and S. Ramaswami Nadhan, were present at the entrance and garlanded the patriot. He was taken in a procession, followed by a band of followers. A huge mass meeting was held in the maidan in front of the Town Hall. Moulvi Syed Murtuza Saheb presided. His future work will be to remove the inequalities among the various divisions of the Hindu community, and to ameliorate and elevate the condition of the depressed classes.”

Gopalakrishnayya delivered three speeches before he came back to Andhra. The first was at Trichinopoly on the day of his release; the second was at Sreerangam, the next morning; and the third was the famous Soundarya Mahal speech at Madras, on the 4th October. And being the first utterances after his freedom, it will be necessary to refer to them in

some compass. It need hardly be added that, in all these places, he was presented with eulogistic addresses from the public.

According to a *Hindu* report, Gopalakrishnayya spoke at Trichinopoly in a humorous vein for about two hours. He began by explaining the greatness of Sree Ramachandra and the sacredness of *Ram Nam*. The national idiom of self-expression, he said, was *Harikatha*. He thanked the public of Trichinopoly for presenting him an address. They had said very kind words about him. But he was just as good or as bad as they all were. Tamilnad had sent hundreds of them to jail, and he was like one of them. When people were released from jail, they were congratulated in the belief that they had undergone terrible trials. But jail life was not so bad as they imagined. It was infinitely superior to that which they were having outside.

“Our people had endured slavery for centuries. Muhamadans lost their ruling capacity a few centuries back. And the Sikhs, very recently. That was why the Sikhs were able to put up a very strong fight in their Gurukhabagh affair. The miserable plight of their country was due to their own *Karma*, the result of their own activities and not to any external agency.

“He certainly loved the English people, because he was in England for five years and he knew they were superior to us in every respect. It was a simple proposition. Otherwise they would not have ruled us from 6,000 miles away! He did not mind the British ruling the land if they worked themselves into our society. They ought not to have any hatred towards the British; if they had, they had no right to participate in this movement.

“Many members were not wanted for thenon-co-operation movement. They wanted very few who could face the guns. There was no use of sentimentality. They had better think a million times before taking a leap. It did not matter even if they had only five or ten non-co-operators. It did not matter if there were ten in the whole of India. One Mahatma Gandhi

was capable of bringing about such a wonderful moral and spiritual revolution in our land, because the spiritual forces radiating from that concentrated centre called Gandhi reached every centre represented by human beings. That one individual was enough. He was having his *Sadhana* in the Yerwada jail; and we will have his *Siddhi*.

“Chirala-Perala and Gurukhabagh seemed to him to be the two spots chosen by providence to demonstrate the power of His Leela to herald the new idea of life that was going to rule the world in future. In Gurukhabagh, it was primarily a religious affair; in Chirala, it was a municipal affair—political affair. The scene in Gurukhabagh was laid in a garden; in Chirala it was absolute arid sands. Three miles away from Chirala-Perala, for eleven months, twenty thousand people lived on the sands. Now it was the garden of Allah! It had its own grandeur; everything was the work of the divine artist! In Gurukhabagh, 4,000 people participated; in Chirala 20,000. Men, women and children, Hindus—with all their discordant divisions,—Musalmans, untouchables, everybody participated. Just imagine palatial buildings being abandoned to the devil and the inmates living in the sands three miles away!

“The struggle in Gurukhabagh went on for fourteen days; that in Chirala for eleven months. Chirala was supposed to have failed in the language of the market-place.

“Why Chirala failed and Gurukhabagh succeeded was that ever since they started the Chirala affair, the leaders all honour to them—honour for their valour and death for their ambition—they had suffered and sacrificed, but they exhibited indecision and want of self-confidence—every one used to tell him that they had launched Civil Disobedience when they had not even given up the courts and they had no Charka in their houses. But he thought that, by driving the thin end of the wedge, by inducing the townsmen to support Civil Disobedience with respect to a municipality which had been despised by everybody, he could create an atmosphere, mental and moral, in which each and every one of them might gradually reform himself.

“To deal with 20,000 credulous people of low moral level and to keep them in unity, to make their hearts one, was an experiment in mass psychology. It had given them great discipline; and it was due to Mahatma Gandhi and to me, so far as I represented and understood that great man.

“Except Mr. S. Sreenivasa Iyengar who promised to be one of our great leaders, none came there. No C. F. Andrews, no Malaviaji came to Chirala. No Congress Committee came to enquire into their condition, and, in spite of one of their leaders, the Congress ultimately gave Rs. 3,000. He had personally collected Rs. 10,000 for Chirala. The merchants used to manage everything else.

“The leaders began to grow nervous. They were amateurs in the game. They did not know how to educate the masses. They did not know that, when they put their finger on the one sensitive point in the moral and mental constitution, it had its effect on each and every form. Every aspect of life, religion and politics, was intertwined. In both cases, the success was only moral so far, and they had to carry on to achieve material success. The Akalis would carry on, because they had leaders who knew how to deal with the masses, who knew that mass education had to be worked up by pressing local grievances which could rally the people. They knew it in Gurukhabagh. But here they did not know. And for a long time, Andhras used to take orders from the North in Congress matters. They lacked self-confidence.

“Mahatma Gandhi shouldered responsibility which perhaps would visit him with hanging some day. Gandhiji expected the possibility of facing the British guns, while he and they would not; that was the whole secret. They need not be ashamed to own that they lacked the sense of responsibility. Non-co-operation was a movement of self-purification. It did not matter if they did not get Swaraj. Let them try to purify themselves, to have self-confidence, to become brave in shouldering responsibility, and discharging it to the point of death. That was one of the most important results of the campaign.

“And secondly, religion must reinforce politics. One year of political work had shown us that social inequalities should be removed. Mahatmaji had suggested the removal of untouchability to meet all these obstacles. There was no such thing as ‘Hindu’ religion. That name was given them by their masters and accepted by them as slaves. In jail, Christians had their prayers on Sundays, and the Mohammadans congregated on Fridays. But the Hindus had nothing. The different divisions among the Hindus were necessary when the Aryans first came. There was now no marked racial difference among the people inhabiting this country. He did not think there were any in this land to whom the Vedas could be denied. Sankara preached *Advaita* in his day. But unfortunately, he was not spared to work out moral philosophy and reform social institutions. Mahatma Gandhi had come to fulfill his (Sankara’s) mission. Unity was the one essential thing. This was the proper time for a new *Smriti* based on Vedanta, which he proposed to bring into existence for regulating the changed conditions of the world. There was no use of any other reform in such a rotten society. He had hopes that, in Andhradesa, they would completely eliminate the social inequality in the Hindu community in one year. Spiritual equality, when translated into political life, was democracy. Non-violence was the law of life, the revelation of Mahatma Gandhi. The *Sutra* of Gandhiji is that we should create a new *Smriti*. The Pandits of the present day were mere gramophones. They could not enjoy the music that they produced. Non-Brahmins were right in working up a crusade against Brahmins. But he could not understand their alliance with the bureaucracy. He was one with them in crying down the Brahmin. There were no Brahmins worth the name in this country.

“Chirala was a rehearsal. The less we talk of Civil Disobedience and Council-entry, the better. I have made up my mind to work up a new *Smriti* and recast Hindu society according to modern needs. That is my mission in life, to which I shall dedicate myself.”

From Trichinopoly, Gopalakrishnayya proceeded to Sreerangam, where there is the famous temple of Sree Ranganadha, on

the shores of the Cauvery; and after a purifying riverbath, he entered the holy presence in due sanctimonious manner—his knowledge of the correct religious methods was well-known—and made obeisance before the Lord, in whose praise he composed a hymn in Sanskrit and recited it extempore. After his return from the temple, he attended a meeting, where he delivered a speech from which the following are extracts.

“Brothers, it is 9 A.M. We ought to be plying the Charka now! That is what to do in this Gandhian era. Though we pretend life, we are not living. If we were living, we should have worn Khadi. The British Government and their agents are laughing in their sleeves that we, Indians, do not even wear Khadi. Some people ask, ‘How are you going to get Swaraj by Khadi?’ Mahatmaji presented it as a didactical contrivance. When you put on Khaddar, you must go only to holy places. You will then be a *Bhakta*; and so gradually it will begin scorching the accumulated crusts of slavery. It is the thin end of the wedge—the first stage in *Karma mukti*. ”

After stressing the need for a socio-religious programme, he concluded: “I now call upon you to concentrate on this work of annihilating social inequity and inequality as a necessary condition to winning Swaraj and everything else.” The Chairman of the meeting, in his concluding remarks, paid a glowing tribute to the speaker and called him *Bharata Ratna*, and not merely *Andhra Ratna*; and he thanked him on behalf of them all.

The hymn to Ranganadha contains nine slokas, of which the following is a free rendering. Needless to add that the many precious gems and beauties of the original are untranslatable; and it is intended to give here only the broad sense of the verses.

1. “Washed by the holy waters of the Cauvery,
Srirangam lies in the heart of the Tamil land;
Whose hospitality I have enjoyed for nigh an year,
And on my way to my native home, Oh! Lord,
Let me pause awhile, on this day of my freedom,
And tell you the tale of the state of Thy kingdom,

2. "Oh! Ranganadha!

Lying on the downy couch of the serpent-heads,
On the crested waves of Thy aqueous essence,
Enjoying the bliss of harmony of Thy universe,
Oh! Lord of the Tamil race!
Bless me awhile,
And give me a hearing.

3. "Oh! Thou, the Merciful One,

Who art the Chancellor of the Tamil land,
And art immersed in deep sleep of immortal beatitude
Of Thine own universal soul,
Let me interrupt you awhile,
Oh! Ranganadha,
And introduce myself.
Lord! In your former birth,
At the end of the second age of this universal history,
You came in the guise of Sree Ramachandra
And trod with infinite love,
Our blessed Andhra land!
I am that Andhra:
Andhroham!
And I have come to tell you
The tale of Thy woes.

4. "In days of yore,

While the East was indifferent to its *Dharma*,
And the lands were in famine,
And the kings were quarrelling among themselves,
And the hardy Muslims were putting to sword
many a native son of the soil:
And the crest of pride of the great Vijayanagar kings
had fallen;
Then came the Englishmen into our land,
In guise of a trading firm,
Under plea of quiet trade,
But with tricks of a more terrible import at bottom.

5. "Those men, belonging to a little Isle
on the Western end of Europe,
Have spread to the ten sides,
And built up an Empire
On which 'the sun never sets',
Such is their pride, Lord!
So vast is its extent;
And all this happened,
While you were in your *Yoganidra*
And their conquest included Thine entire
Bharat Varsha!
6. "Commencing their career as a trading Corporation,
They pierced gradually into the entire land,
And making use of the five tricks of the trade,
Picked up quarrels with our kings, one by one,
And established their rule,
From the cold Himalayas in the north
To the distant seas in the south;
And all Thy lovely land is now gone!
7. "The result of this change, Oh Lord!
is famine, pestilence and irreligion;
Alien culture, outlandish education;
Taxes on cattle, water, fruit trees and on stones,
Oppressive land tax and even tax on simple salt;
Decrepit bodies, degenerate hearts,
Perpetual slumber, eternal poverty;
8. "An end to the ancient faith of the Brahmins,
The *Dharma* of the land,
With its devotion to gifts, religious study, meditation,
contemplation, good conduct and truthful deeds;
People addicted to demoniac ways of living;
Rulers become sinful and weak;
People subjected to foreign education;
Dwarfed in body, disunited in mind and
sorrowful in soul;
Everything in the land has become
But an adjunct to the Britisher.

9. "Oh ! Thou, the Merciful One !

See this sad plight of Thine ancient land,
 The cruel ordination of inviolable destiny !
 But in the midst of this pathless maze,
 There is but one glimmering ray of hope,
 In the truthful path of Gandhian non-co-operation.
 Look, Thou, Oh ! Merciful One !
 And see Thy country's sad plight,
 For a minute."

CHAPTER XXI

SOUNDARYA MAHAL SPEECH

From Sreerangam, Gopalakrishnayya arrived on his way home, on 4-10-1922. The one cause of this hurry was that his grandmother was reported to be very ill at that time, and he was anxious to see her. At Madras, a meeting was arranged at the Soundarya Mahal, where addresses were presented to him on behalf of both the Madras Andhra Congress Committee and the Madras Tamil Congress Committee. Mr. V. Chakkarai Chettiar, in garlanding him, said: "As I see Gopalakrishnayya sit before me, the impression produced on my mind is not that he has just returned from jail after undergoing the rigours of imprisonment for a year; but he appears to me like the bridegroom who has just returned from his mother-in-law's house." Mr. A. Rangaswamy Iyengar described him as "really a gem of the purest ray serene".

Gopalakrishnayya, on rising, was given a great ovation. He addressed the gathering for full two hours in Telugu to begin with, but in English towards the close. He commenced his speech with a Sanskrit couplet and said that Madras, which was the meeting-place of Andhras, Tamils and Musalmans, was a sacred place, and to every one of them who had honoured him

that day, he offered his hearty thanks. And so saying, he prostrated himself before the audience, in uttermost salutation to the Sabha which, he said, was an embodiment of Narayana.

"The speaker began to read out" so goes the *Swarajya* report "in his charming silvery tone, a lengthy Sanskrit poem he composed in honour of Sree Ranganadhaswamy at Sreerangam." And it was followed by an interesting explanation of its meaning. Referring to himself, he said: "Half of my sin has gone by my stay in jail; the other half disappeared when I paid my *Darshan* to Sri Ranganadha. Therefore, how can I be anything but a bridegroom now?" Alluding to Mr. Chakkara's hint, he said, he was certainly coming out of his mother-in-law's house. He was taken to the jail to test him whether he was worthy of the hand of the bride, who, in this case, was the *Swarajya* Lakshmi - the fair and lovely Goddess of Liberty. "The Government have tested me by all means. And I am now wearing the groom's garments" (referring to his new Khaddar clothes).

He then referred to his work at Chirala and compared it with the Gurukhabagh campaign and then took up the problem of our social inequality. "We have not developed the perfect spirit of comradeship that is essential for our future progress. The unity that is now presented in our ranks is not a genuine one; it is of the most superficial variety. In the Punjab, in the Akali struggle, there is the primary incentive of religion, and that is a great unifying force. Every Akali knows that every blow that he receives takes him one step nearer Heaven. Chirala would have succeeded if there had been perfect comradeship. There were social animosities and our unity was only superficial.

"The extinction of social inequalities is the problem in our country. It is the L. C. M. of all national problems. We have not so far made any serious effort to solve it. I want to say what I have thought about this problem while I was in jail. I am not going to say much about the Hindu-Muslim unity. You all know the need for it. What I am more concerned with

is the rotten condition of our Hindu society. But the problem is not so easy as some think. It cannot be solved by resolutions in the Council." *

"To think of political freedom apart from social freedom betrays ignorance of the nature of our society. There are no watertight compartments in our life. On the other hand, they are intertwined and interlinked. To think of the two separately is typical of the analytical mind of the West. But ours is a synthetical genius. It is only when we can remove social inequality that we can present a united front. That is Gandhi's *Sutra*. Our duty is to interpret it properly and put it into practice. And for that, let us see what we have got to do.

"First of all, there is the caste system, with its Brahmin—non-Brahmin and its touchability—untouchability feuds. Everybody must become a Brahmin. There should be no other caste, no non-Brahmin or Chhandala or untouchable. The present Brahmins are Brahmins only in name. They must first be destroyed. And with them, the non-Brahmins also will go. Then must begin the creation of a new-Brahminical race, which will have no distinctions of caste or creed, touchable or untouchable. Then there will be only one caste in the country, viz., Brahmins".

Here he traced the history of the caste system from the Vedic times downwards. "An epoch is a *Smriti-Samaya* or the time when a new Law is made. In the first epoch, highest knowledge was the only 'reserved subject' for the high caste: the remaining aspects of life were open to all the communities, with full and equal opportunities for all. In the second age, Sree Krishna destroyed the theory of caste by birth and introduced *Guna* and *Karma* to determine one's caste. Then again, there was change; and Sankara presented a new formula and founded a new spiritual democracy and preached the funda-

*"In our view," say the distinguished authors of the *Simon Survey*, "the most formidable of the evils which India is suffering from have their roots in social and economic customs of long-standing, which can only be removed by the action of the Indian peoples themselves." (Vol. I, P. 409)

mental oneness of all life. In his famous encounter with a Chhandala, he made it clear that even an untouchable, if he recognises *Brahman*, can be initiated into its mysteries; in other words, he too can know the *Brahman*; he too can receive the *Brahmopadesam*. That was Sankara's contribution. But Sankara could not complete his work, as he died prematurely, at thirty-two.

"Now again is a *Smriti-Samaya* the time for a new code of life. A democratic age had dawned on the world, and people can be fairly estimated in mass to be of equal capacity and understanding, provided they are given equal opportunities. The *Sutra* of Gandhiji was Love and Non-violence. Whoever carried out this principle was a Bhahmin. The time is propitious, and somebody should shoulder the responsibility for the *movement of universal Brahminism*. Who has got the cheek and the impudence to do it and stand before the orthodoxy and invite their onslaughts, determined to eliminate completely the moribund orthodoxy we have got at present, and introduce in its stead, a new orthodoxy, a 'dynamic orthodoxy' as Sister Nivedita called it?

"And if no one is prepared to undertake this task, I have resolved to do it myself. I am going to produce a new *Smriti*. I will consult whomsoever I think are worth considering. And I will at once proceed with a wholesale conversion of all into Brahmins. The work has the potentiality to enthuse even the dumbest amongst us. And what is more important, no Collectors or Governors can take objection to our work of converting everybody into Brahmins."

"A word now to the non-Brahmins. You can fight with the Brahmins. You can tear them to pieces, if you like; and I shall rejoice at it. But, why on earth, should you ally yourself with the bureaucracy? But it is not your fault. I don't blame you for it. I blame my own Brahmins. They have fallen from their pristine position. And with them, who are the natural leaders, others also have fallen. And these false Brahmins have got to be destroyed. And new Brahmins should be created. I,

therefore, want to create the real Brahmins. I shall make all into Brahmins. I may fail. It does not matter. But I am convinced that I must at least attempt doing it...*Swasthi Prajabhyah etc.*"

The chairman of the meeting, Mr. T. Prakasam, in his concluding remarks, paid a tribute to the speaker and said: "The experience of jail life for over twelve months has spiritualized Mr. Gopalakrishnayya beyond all comprehension. He has come out of jail not with any schemes or programmes, but with a mission for himself—a mission which, if accomplished with the co-operation of our countrymen, would certainly mean more than Swaraj. It was a mission which could not be attacked by Ministers or Governors, Viceroys or Secretaries of State. It was a mission in which, if they had really faith in God, they should all co-operate. The Sikhs succeeded because they had faith in God and had not lost their souls under the influence of alien education. And he hoped that, just as he had done at Chirala, the Andhraratna would set about to produce a community which will be equal to the Sikh community, with the same faith in God, in a particular area to begin with."

CHAPTER XXII

MASULIPATAM SPEECH

After stirring the depths of the capital city, Gopalakrishnayya entered Andhradesa; and from there, he carried on for months a crusade against the existing irreligion of the land and proclaimed everywhere the gospel of his neo-Brahminism. During this period, he delivered speeches in many towns of Andhra on his new mission; and we shall notice the contents of one more of these speeches, the one delivered at Masulipatam.

But before going to this speech, a word must be said of his other activities which had intervened between his Madras and Masulipatam performances. At the time of his release from jail,

his grandmother was seriously ill, and Gopalakrishnayya felt anxious whether he would be able to see her before she died. So he hurried to his native village of Kuchinapudi where his wife and grandmother were. He found them both—the one well, the other ill—and God knows what joy he must have felt when he was able to see his ‘mother’ again alive. The granny lived on for a fortnight afterwards, and about the third week of October, she died at a ripe old age.

After completing the obsequies of his granny, Gopalakrishnayya wended his way to Chirala, where he arrived on the 6th November. He was received at the station grandly, the elite of the town being present on the platform. In his reply, he reaffirmed his determination to settle down in Ramnagar and continue his Vidya Peetha Goshti work. He is reported to have sympathised with those who, out of their difficulties, had gone back to the town, though he regretted that some of them should have gone back to the municipality also. But he thought that they were in a transitional stage, and attributed the real cause of their failure to want of social and religious unity.

From Chirala, he proceeded to Guntur and Bezwada, whence he arrived at Masulipatam on the 11th November. Just at that time, he felt that the Congress exchequer needed replenishment; and secondly, he also thought that he should test his own strength by putting a value on his voice. Hitherto he was delivering speeches for nothing; and those who were attending his meetings were merely listening to him and going home, without really caring for what he had said. But now, he thought that he must make the people sacrifice somewhat, and accordingly, he declared that, for every speech, there must be a *Dakshina* of at least Rs. 116, without which he would not ordinarily deliver any speech. From that time onwards, in every place, he insisted upon this fee; and in every place, big or small, he got it too. And the peculiar feature of it was that, everywhere, the offering was spontaneous; and it was also a universal gift: it contained both the rupees of the rich and the pice of the poor, which he made use of for many a deserving cause, and chiefly for the Congress fund.

Gopalakrishnayya arrived at Masulipatam on the 11th November, 1922. As usual, a meeting was held and he delivered a speech. At the outset, he referred to the demise of the founder of the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala—Mr. K. Hanumantha Rao—which took place while Gopalakrishnayya was in jail. Notwithstanding his association with the Kalasala, Gopalakrishna's personal regard for Hanumantha Rao never left him. And before he began his speech, he asked for his Rs. 116 to aid the Hanumantha Rao Memorial Fund which had been started by his friends. One of the leaders thereupon ridiculed the idea and prophesied failure. But hardly had Gopalakrishnayya announced the proposal and the bowl went round, in less than ten minutes, than the required sum was paid in.

In his speech, Gopalakrishnayya first referred to Mahatma Gandhi and his *Tapas*. Gandhiji promised to get us "Swaraj in one year;" and the words of Mahatmas are inexorable. We should have had Swaraj long ago; but his will-power had not yet proved adequate for the purpose. Therefore, he went to Yerwada jail for doing penance for a long six years; and by the time he returns from jail, he would become a *Siddha*, and his word would be law. And during this period, what should we do in order to prepare ourselves for his coming?

He went on: "This is not the time for any civil disobedience campaigns, because the country lacked the necessary unity for it. Some want to enter the Councils; but that is a futile step. The real work to do is contained in the Bardoli constructive programme, which includes (1) Khaddar; and (2) Unity."

Khaddar, he said, means promotion of cottage industries. The modern factory industry is fraught with many evils. Factories reduce men into mill-hands. They add to the oppression of the poor at the hands of the rich. And unrest and illwill in society increase. Even in the organisation of Khaddar, the factory system ought not to be encouraged. Everybody should spin the yarn necessary for himself or herself. The wage or cooly system is wrong in principle and must be discouraged.

The other thing in the Bardoli programme is removal of untouchability. It is a stirring programme—in fact, a revolutionary one. The Congress is a national institution. It does not belong to the Hindus alone. It belongs to Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all. So it preaches love towards the Chhandala in the Hindus, and tolerance to the Muslim; and through Gandhiji's example of Love and Truth, it has even given the go bye to Christian philanthropy, so that hereafter no missionary shall say that all heathens will go to hell. Its appeal to the Hindu is to throw away that curse of untouchability which is the root cause of our social degeneracy. This evil exists not in touch alone. It has its roots in sound, touch, form, taste and in smell also. It is a fact that there is a lot of social inequity, illwill and jealousy in our society. And till we remove that inequity, it is useless to pretend that we will get Swaraj.

“What do we mean by the removal of untouchability? Is untouchability gone if we merely allow the Panchamas to sit upon our pials? Do not our house walls still divide them from us? Is it enough if we allow them into our drawing rooms? Between the drawing room and the dining hall, are there not still dividing walls? The curse won't go by these superficial and external reforms. We must, therefore, consider this question deeply. Mixing of castes is the law of this age. Unless we reshuffle the cards, there is no sport in the game.

“Brahmins have always been considered as the highest species among men in this part of the planet. Brahmins have never ruled this land. Non-Brahmins have always been our rulers. But whoever was the ruler, Brahmins always enjoyed an honoured place in society. It has been their proud privilege to keep alive the Torch of Light (*Brahmopadesam*) and to interpret *Dharma*. But things have become topsy-turvy now. Brahmins everywhere, in offices and in Local Boards, have become untouchables. They have become worse than Chhandalas. Oh! You, Brahmins, what are you thinking of your present plight? Do you weep like women? Or will you seek your own salvation? Where is your race pride now? Where is your caste strength? Hatred of the Brahmin is growing by leaps and bounds. Kshatriyas,

Vysyas, Sudras, Chhandalas, all are joining hands against the Brahmins. If there is still any light left in you, the time has come for it to shine, now or never.

“Everyone will attempt to go up to the higher ideal and not to sink to the depths of the Chhandala level. It is Brahminism that is the ideal of all. The Vysyas are aspiring after it. Some of the Sudras of late have begun to wear the sacred thread. The Goldsmiths have dubbed themselves as ‘Viswa Brahmins.’ It is, therefore, but legitimate that everybody should aspire to reach the high caste level. And if we are to apply the Law of Equality among all, we must make them all into Brahmins. We must convert the new non-Brahmin movement into a Brahmin movement.

“He who shall grasp the secret of Gayatri, shall be a Brahmin. Everybody, whether he is a Kshatriya or Vysya, Sudra or Chhandala, can become a pure soul by initiation of Gayatri. The great non-Brahmin sage, Viswamitra of old, did penance and became a *Brahma Rishi*. Sree Krishna set aside the standard of birth for determining one’s caste. Buddha showed the path of *Nirvana* to all. But all these could not avail to lay a solid foundation to Hindu society. It was left to Sree Sankaracharya to supply this solid basis through his *Advaita* philosophy. But Sankara himself had hardly the time to begin his work. He could barely finish his preachings when he died. His interview with the Chhandala shows that he approved the idea of applying *Advaita* even to our everyday practical life. After Sankara, Ramanuja gave the *Tirumantra* to all people, including the untouchables. But even his work was still incomplete.

“Gandhiji is now the man to fulfill this great ideal of our social unification. This removal of untouchability should not be interpreted in any narrow sense. Truth and non-violence are his cardinal principles. They are the pivot of Brahminism in India. Classification of society into castes is possible only when their minds and functions agree. But when professions are practised irrespective of caste, mixing up or *Saankaryam* is inevitable. I am a Brahmin. I have received the *Brahmopadesam*,

no doubt become *Vratyas*, that is, fallen from their own ritualistic rights. But by performing the ceremony of expiation, they are re-entitled to their original caste rights. This is the birthday of Sree Ramakrishna. Every one will be purified by taking His name. Therefore, this is the best occasion for giving the Bhaktas the sacred thread. Give all those who come the appropriate Gayatri *Mantram*, according as they are Kshatriyas or Vysyas. All these must be gradually raised to the status of Brahmana. All Hindus are brothers. It is we, Hindus, who have degraded them by repeatedly saying for centuries: 'We won't touch you! We won't touch you.' No wonder that the whole country is brought down to the verge of humiliation, cowardice and stupidity. Now they have to be raised by preaching to them the gospel of hope and cheer. Preach to them, 'You too are men like ourselves. You too have the same rights as we have.' As a result of the Swamiji's decision, more than fifty Bhaktas on that day received the Gayatri *Mantram* and the sacred thread, having first bathed themselves in the Ganges, and then bowed before the image of Sri Ramakrishna." "The initiates were naturally much ridiculed," the chronicle added, "by the neighbours for having raised themselves to the status of Brahmins. Be that as it may, though the Swami did not preach in public in favour of giving the sacred thread to the so-called Sudras, he was glad to watch the movement to Brahminise all the castes who claimed to be twice-born, which had been in existence for some time ago, spread rapidly in Bengal in recent years. And nowadays, a large demand is made for the Brahminical thread by those who have so long been regarded as Sudras." (p. 215)

How like Gopalakrishnayya and yet how different! The ideal was just the same; it was to Brahminise the peoples of the East and the West. And it was through the Gayatri *Mantra* and the giving of the sacred thread. But yet, Gopalakrishnayya addressed himself first to the East; *publicly* preached the gospel of Brahminising even the Sudras; and did not take shelter under any special holiness of his Guru's birthday; while Vivekananda addressed himself more to the West; and also claimed the privilege of his *Sannyasa* for his actions, while Gopalakrishnayya braved it through as a *Grihasta*.

After his return from America, in the course of an interview with *The Hindu* of Madras, the Swamiji is reported to have made the following observations :

Q : What are your views with regard to the Indian masses ?

A : Oh ! We are awfully poor, and our masses are very ignorant about secular things.

Q : What will you propose for the improvement of our masses ?

A : We have to give them secular education. We have to follow the plan laid down by our ancestors, that is, to bring all the ideals slowly down among the masses. Raise them slowly up, raise them to equality. Import even secular knowledge to religion.

Q : But do you think Swamiji, it is a task that can be easily accomplished ?

A : It will, of course, have to be gradually worked out. But if there are enough self-sacrificing young fellows, who, I hope, will work with me, it can be done tomorrow. It all depends upon the zeal and the self-sacrifice brought to the task.

Q : But if the present degraded condition is due to their past *Karma*, Swamiji, how do you propose to help them ?

A : *Karma* is the eternal assertion of human freedom. If we can bring ourselves down by our *Karma*, surely, it is in our power to raise ourselves by it. The masses besides have not brought themselves down altogether by their own *Karma*. So we should give them better environment to work in. I do not propose any levelling of caste. Caste is a very good thing. Caste is the plan we want to follow. What caste really is, not one in a million understands. There is no country in the world without caste. In India, from caste, we reach to the point where there is no caste. Caste is based throughout on that principle. The plan in India is to make everybody Brahmana, the Brahmana being the ideal of humanity. If you read the history of India, you will find that attempts have always been made to raise the lower classes. Many are the classes that have been raised. Many more will follow till the whole will become Brahmana. That is the plan.

We have only to raise them without bringing down anybody. And this has mostly to be done by the Brahmanas themselves.

Q: What are your views, Swamiji, in regard to the relation of caste to rituals?

A: Caste is continually changing. Rituals are continually changing. So are forms. It is the substance, the principle, that does not change. It is in Vedas that we have to study our religion. With the exception of the Vedas, every book must change. The authority of the Vedas is for all time to come; the authority of every one of our other books is for the time being. For instance, one *Smriti* is powerful for one age, another for another age. Great prophets are always coming and pointing the way to work. Some prophets work for the lower classes. Others, like Madhwa, gave to women the right to study the Vedas. Caste should not go, but should only be re-adjusted occasionally. Within the old structure is to be found life enough for the building of two hundred thousand new ones. It is sheer nonsense to desire the abolition of caste. The new method is evolution of the old.

From the above, the following conclusions emerge:

1. The ideal which the great Swami Vivekananda had upheld for our humanity was a world religion, universal Brahminism. It was the same thing as was preached by the Andhraratna subsequently.

2. This Brahminism should be based and broadbased on caste—*Varna*—and not on its annihilation, though perfect equality of all was insisted by both.

3. Theoretically, the Swamiji recognised the necessity of upgrading the Sudras also. But, in its practical implementation, he desisted from extending it below the ranks of the *Dwijas*. Whereas the Andhraratna proclaimed a Brahminization of all, the Sudras and even the Chhandalas included. But the Swamiji and Andhraratna, however, were equally emphatic in denouncing untouchability and urging for its total abolition.

4. The method of *Brahminising* chosen by both was the same, viz., through initiation into the Gayatri *Upasana*, which

means admission into the Vedic culture. And the Swamiji further took care to prescribe the appropriate *Beeja* also according to one's *Varna*, which is now quite forgotten in our present day practice.

5. The *Yajnopaaveeta*, according to both, is the visible symbol of this *Dwijja-isation*.

6. As regards the synthesisation of the Western and Indian traditions, the Andhraratna was perhaps more constructive than his great compeer, in that he prescribed the conversion of our ten Avatars into twelve, including the Christ and Mohammad, and the eighteen Puranas into twenty, including the Bible and the Quran.

7. And in regard to the actual process of bringing up these initiates through education, it will be interesting to find that both Vivekananda and Gopalakrishnayya had quite similar and most interesting views, because their ideas on national education were almost identical.

It has already been seen that the Tandya or Praudha Brahmana attached to the Sama Veda is said to contain certain "Vratya Stomas," which are sacrifices meant to enable non-Brahminical Indians to enter the Brahminical fold. The *Maha Bharata* gives a number of clues in this regard; and other Sastras also contain similar provisions for the purpose, including river baths, pilgrimages etc. And historically speaking, the conversion of lakhs of foreigners and aborigines into the valiant Rajput classes through an *Agni-homa* (Fire-sacrifice) on the top of Mount Abu is well-known, while the heroic part played by the Pratiharas, the Chahamaras, the Chalukyas and the Paramaras, claiming their descent from the Sun or the Moon dynasty or the Ikshvakus or the Pandavas, constitutes one of the brightest parts of our medieval history.

M. R. Jayakar, in his presidential address at the Sind Hindu Conference, once declared : " In Maharashtra, the non-Brahmin wanted to wear the sacred thread, to learn Gayatri, in short, to enter the cultural fold of the Brahmins. Hinduism will have to satisfy this craving wherever it is genuine and

the latter, headed by the late C. R. Das, Vithalbhai Patel, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Motilal Nehru, banded themselves into a new Swarajya Party, and Gopalakrishnayya's coming out of jail synchronised with the birth of a new Swarajism, of the Dasite stamp, in which the Gandhian Charka was not dismissed, of course, but was certainly relegated to a back position; and emphasis was laid on the capture of legislative councils and local bodies, which, according to Mr. Das, had become the ramparts of British rule in India, and which, for that very reason, had to be effectively captured by the forces of nationalism, and not merely "boycotted" and left in charge of sycophants and worse men, as it had happened under the Gandhian scheme. And Mr. Das was actually asking: "For God's sake, why do you send wretched men to the councils?" and he wanted that ardent Congressmen should capture these legislatures themselves.

This is not the place to discuss at any length about the relative merits and demerits of these two schools of thought; but owing to its relation to the subsequent work and career of Gopalakrishnayya, a reference to the main point at issue cannot be altogether avoided.

As Lytton says in his book on Rienzi, the great Italian revolutionary of the fourteenth century A. D., there is nothing more glorious than a successful revolution in a country which, through centuries, has been reduced to slavery; but, at the same time, there is nothing more tragic than an attempt at insurrection ending in a humiliating failure, for it will deprive the oppressor of even a moral fear of a possible rebellion, sometime, somewhere, by somebody, and will free his hand to an unbridled rule of fire and sword.

And the case of 1922 India was more or less similar to the one above described. The campaign of non-co-operation had, from the admissions even of the British Governors, completely shaken the foundations of British Raj in the East; but the precipitate withdrawal from the field of action—let alone the merits of individual items of the new programme—on the part of the nationalistic forces at a time when they were in

the white heat of a 'non-violent war,' had not only spelled ruin to the ranks, but it actually tightened the grip of the foreigner, and, as a matter of fact, while Lord Reading was "on his knees" for a Round Table Conference in December 1921, the British Government was still unbending in its opposition even for an announcement of the conference method at the end of 1929.

The late Mr. Das — all honour for his vision and glory for his sacrifices—perceived the inwardness of this situation as none else did; and with a view to extricate a "defeated nation" from being crushed, he prescribed a plan for capturing the very citadels of British power in India, and thus saved the country from veritable destruction; and, if every non-co-operator had not been weeded out of India in 1923-25, as the "Extremists" of the Vandemataram days had been done earlier, and as the Bolsheviks had done with regard to their Czarist and other opponents in Russia—in fact, complete extermination of all opponents is a hallowed political principle, — it was solely due to the self-effecting efforts of the late C. R. Das and his devoted band of lieutenants in the Swarajya Party. But these efforts of Mr. Das and his colleagues were strenuously opposed by the orthodox no-changers, who constituted the majority in the Congress, and they took up the mantle of the Mahatma on themselves and did everything in their power to frustrate their aims. In this internecine warfare between the no-changers and the Swarajists, Gopalakrishnayya, we will find, took no mean part.

Immediately after his release from jail, he was faced with the problem: "To enter the Councils or not to enter", which, in fact, became the burning question of the day. And for answering it, apart from his loyalty to Gandhiji, he relied upon the reports of his Congress friends who depicted Das and his friends as horrible self-seekers, and in his earlier speeches, he began to condemn and ridicule the pro-council-wallahs. Thus, a strong no-change mentality colours his first speeches after freedom. But at the same time, in course of the Gaya Congress

and afterwards, Gopalakrishnayya must have witnessed an under-current of insincerity of the no-change ranks; and a suspicion gradually crept into his mind as to why the Gandhian leaders, instead of applying themselves to a task of social and religious unification which, to him, mattered most at this time, were holding the dagger of civil disobedience before the public gaze. He himself had led a great campaign of civil disobedience and, therefore, knew its ins and outs fully, while the rest of them who had no real experience of it, with a "lip-deep japam" of the constructive programme, merely began to talk of "preparations" for civil disobedience.

Gopalakrishnayya left the Gaya Congress with such doubts in his mind; and though his vote was with the no-changers at that time, a careful reader of his speeches and utterances of the time cannot help noticing that he was rather in uncomfortable company in the Congress fold. This divergence later on intensified and grew gradually till at last he declared that he would be "with sinners rather than with spinners," meaning thereby the Swarajists who were supposed to be 'sinning' in respect of the Congress orthodoxy, and the no-changers respectively.

The resolution No. VIII of the Gaya Congress on civil disobedience ran as follows: "This Congress reaffirms its opinion that civil disobedience is the only civilised and effective substitute for an armed rebellion when every other remedy for preventing the arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority has been tried.

"And in view of the widespread awakening of the people to a sense of the urgent need for Swarajya and the general demand and necessity for civil disobedience in order that the national goal may be speedily attained, and in view of the fact that the necessary atmosphere of non-violence has been preserved in spite of all provocation.

"This Congress calls upon all Congress workers to complete the preparations for offering civil disobedience by strengthening and expanding the national organization and to take immediate steps for the collection of at least Rs. 25 lakhs for the Tilak Swarajya

Fund and the enrolment of at least 50,000 volunteers, by a date to be fixed by the All-India Congress Committee and empowers the Committee to issue necessary instructions for carrying this resolution into practical effect."

The A. I. C. C. which met at Gaya on 1-1-1923 fixed 30th April 1923 as the date for "completing these preparations" for civil disobedience; but as they were left unfinished at the end of the period, the A. I. C. C. which met on 25-5-1923, "regretted that the period fixed at Gaya for the collection of money for the Tilak Swarajya Fund and the enrolment of volunteers has expired without the quota for men and money being completed."

But we are anticipating events a good deal, and so far as Gopalakrishnayya was concerned, the first sign of his conversion was in an interview dated 15-2-1923 which *inter alia* read thus: "The quintessence of the deliberations of the Gaya Congress was an unalloyed reaffirmation of Mahatmaji's position. The civil disobedience clause in the resolution is as bad as the compromise alternative in the matter of its ineffectuality and expediency and it was tolerated purely on the ground of its harmlessness. It lacks exactness. Sjt. Rajagopalachari was either doubtful or reluctant or diplomatic to disclose the purpose and programme for which the men and money were intended. He, however, consoled himself that there was sufficient time to think over the specific form and occasion of the projected civil disobedience and shaped every one of his arguments, nay, every word of his, with the solemn prefix: 'Thus spake Mahatma Gandhi'; and this satisfied us all, though, those of us who are to be in the actual mire, are still pretty sceptical as to the achievement of this feat of collecting men and money. 'Thus wants Mahatmaji, and we shall proceed on.'..."

The acceptance and undertaking of civil disobedience must not trouble us very much and, in fact, ought not to enter into our consideration in the matter of collection of men and money. If, at the end of April, civil disobedience is ordered by the All India Congress Committee or Working Committee, I think,

that is restored by Swaraj, I fancy even the present profile of the University will find itself completely altered, let us hope. The products of the University can perhaps sell, tolerably at least, in the market, but fire and life are so far non-existent. But this apart, surely, Viswanadhji is not a 'Hindu!' I cannot say that He has acknowledged this outlandish denomination yet. "

CHAPTER XXV

AS CONGRESS SECRETARY

In July 1923, Gopalakrishnayya was elected to the General Secretaryship of the All-India Congress Committee; and in this chapter we shall read about this secretaryship, which was unique in several respects. The election itself was an accident; and there was no idea of it at the time he went to Nagpur, but when he returned, he came back as the A. I. C. C. Secretary, bringing with him the A. I. C. C. Office also which was unprecedented in the annals of the Congress history, nay, by making 'Desabhakta' Venkatappayya Pantulu its President, during the latter's absence.

In order to understand his work as Congress Secretary, it is necessary to remember the exact situation within the Congress at this time. As already stated, there was an open split between the Swarajists and the no-changers, which was tearing the Congress into two. The Gaya Congress of December 1922 threw out, by a two-thirds majority, the proposals of Mr. Das and his friends for giving a new and effectively political orientation to the Congress activities; but, instead, resolved upon completing the preparations for offering civil disobedience by the end of April 1923. Thereupon Mr. Das resigned his presidentship on 1-1-1923; but his resignation was referred to the next meeting of the A. I. C. C. By the end of April, the required 'preparations' were found

to be incomplete; the men and money asked for by Mr. Rajagopalachari were not forthcoming; and in the A. I. C. C. meeting held at Bombay in May, the no-change leaders refused to be a party to close up their ranks with the Swarajists and present a united front for Swaraj by not carrying on any propaganda amongst the voters; and six of them resigned from the Congress executive accordingly. Mr. Das was not in a majority yet in the Congress, though his position was being better understood gradually. Nevertheless, he persisted in his resignation; and all the resignations were accepted and a neutral executive was set up under the presidentship of Dr. M. A. Ansari. But barely a month passed, and the political situation again changed so quickly that the A. I. C. C. met again at Nagpur in the second week of July, and resolved to hold a special session of the Congress; and with that, the new executive also succumbed and a fresh Working Committee was selected in its stead, this time composed still of no-changers, but with a shade more of the Swarajist touch, if not persuasion. As a result of this reshuffling, Gopalakrishnayya emerged as the General Secretary of the A. I. C. C. at Nagpur, with 'Desabhakta' Konda Venkatappayya Pantulu as its President.

There were three matters outstanding which Gopalakrishnayya had to face on his assumption of office. One was the Akali (Sikh) Gurudwara movement in the Punjab; secondly, the Nagpur flag fight; and lastly, the Congress schism. Of these, the Gurudwara campaign was a local and quasi-religious struggle, which had already ended practically by the time Gopalakrishnayya assumed the reins of office; the flag fight at Nagpur was a still-born affair; and the third alone, viz., the schism in the Congress ranks, was the main work which Gopalakrishnayya had to confront in his new role.

Gopalakrishnayya had to steer the Congress between the two opposing forces of the no-change and Swarajist in the country; and if the Congress could survive that ordeal, not a little credit was due to the work of Gopalakrishna in those days. And as a matter of fact, by the time he laid down his office at the end of the year, both the wings were brought together,

under what has come to be known as the Cocanada Compromise. We shall now examine some details as to how it was brought about.

In the Nagpur A. I. C. C. it might be remembered, it was decided to hold a special session of the Congress at Bombay, which was later on changed to Delhi, where, in September 1923, the following resolution was passed: "While reaffirming its adherence to the principle of non-violent non-co-operation, this Congress declares that Congressmen are at liberty to stand as candidates and this Congress suspends all propaganda against entering the Councils."

From September to December, and the scene shifts from Delhi to Cocanada. The elections were, in the meanwhile, over; and, in spite of heavy odds, the Swarajists scored considerable success at the polls. The controversial item had thus passed out of the range of practical politics when the Cocanada Congress met; and Gopalakrishnayya began his A. I. C. C. work there in high hopes.

In November 1923, while he was on his way to Ahmedabad to attend a meeting of the Congress Working Committee, Gopalakrishnayya expressed himself to a Press interviewer thus:

"Perhaps a revaluation or transvaluation of all values is to be effected by the leaders of thought and action of all communities, so as to hit upon a real living formula that can unify or create us into a homogeneous Indian Nation. This is a stupendous and profound work, which the flippant mediocrity of the present day public life is incompetent to undertake. But why is it that we are constantly treated to Khaddar, its charms and virtues; to Khaddar, its hopes and fears; to Khaddar and Khaddar and nothing more? Is it because it is the most colourless of all the items of the constructive programme that it is constantly harped upon? I do not under-estimate the importance of Khaddar; but the more important item of the constructive programme, nay, the *sine qua non* of any further success of non-co-operation is declared by Mahatma Gandhi to be unity and untouchability. There seems to be a conspiracy

of silence amongst all Congress workers regarding this, due either to the immensity of the task or their incapacity or incompetence to tackle it. An attempt at least as profound as that of Guru Nanakji and as great as that of Akbar Badsha should now be undertaken to effect the unified Indian national life. Anything short of it is a confession of failure and unworthy of Mahatmaji's aim. Let all patriots put their heads together and take to this work, however stupendous it may be, at once, and without any hesitation. Let the Hindus admit Allah as one of the Avatars and the Koran as one of their Puranas and welcome the Musalmans into the brotherhood of a new living homogeneous Indian society; and let the Musalmans, in their turn, welcome the Hindu as the new convert into his great democratic brotherhood. Let the Congress summon, on the pain of India's peril, all the Maulanas and Pandits to contrive a formula of religious and social synthesis which can save mankind from the present distractions and discords. *Advaitism* or realisation of the fundamental oneness of all life must be beaten into the minds and hearts of our people. Unity alone can save us. Pro-changer or no-changer, he must aim at this. He must even think of a catastrophic recasting of society. The time is ripe for it. Every other thing is an empty shibboleth. And the Cocanada Congress will justify itself if it faces this problem of the imminent social revolution in the country."

Early next month, on the eve of the Cocanada Congress, Gopalakrishnayya sent out another appeal from which the following are extracts. After alluding to the "reversal at Bardoli", he proceeded: "Khaddar is good enough routine for the daily ablution, but it is not potential of again launching us on the war path. A strong and almost catastrophic stimulus is needed to release the spirit for the great responsibility that awaits it. Agelong fetters are now to be broken, and broken mercilessly. Yes. The Congress has to undertake it. Unity and untouchability are the two items, that hold potentialities of restarting the nation on its onward march. They are, in fact, one and the same thing.

"The removal of untouchability is to be interpreted in a comprehensive manner. To the Hindu, it enjoins the immediate

purging of this agelong sin and stigma. To the Musalman, it argues religious tolerance. To the zealous Christian, it represents the fact of the existence of many a broker other than the Christ to the divine audience. To the capitalist, it declares economic justice towards his humble labourers. It will be a social revolution galore. Fancy a complete coalescence of all castes! And yet this is the real import of this item of the constructive programme. It is a stupendous task indeed. Shall we undertake it? Can we undertake it? Congress shall be asked to take up this great social problem. If, by contrivance, the spirit is released from agelong social bonds into the free atmosphere of unimpeded self-expression, in its nascent impetuosity, it can blow up all empires of egoism that have desecrated this God's beautiful earth."

Gopalakrishnayya asked for bread; but the Congress could give him only a stone. The achievement of social unity, removal of untouchability and the laying out of strong and living foundations for the future edifice of Swaraj—this was what Gopalakrishnayya aspired to achieve through the Cocanada Congress; but instead, a most colourless and commonplace Khadi Board, as futile in its purpose as it was out of taste with the rich cultural genius of the country, was what the Cocanada Congress could produce. The mountain laboured and brought forth a mouse! No wonder that Gopalakrishnayya felt chilled at the end of the Congress sessions and exclaimed: "Another dry year stares us in the face! The sword-wielding arm of Shaukat Ali is henceforward to dance to the Charka music (for the Big Brother was one of the members of the newly-formed Khaddar Board). It is grand. But a thousand pardons. Is it all? Shall we not allow some honest prose? I am never tired of emphasising that Mahatmajī's emphasis on Khaddar is but an *Ardhavadam*, to serve as an incentive for securing the irreducible minimum of observance of the particular *Dharma*. When it is construed to be the only *Vidhi* desideratum—the bureaucracy is given another lease of self-satisfaction, and the Congress of self-stultification. National susceptibilities demand a life-furthering, and not merely a life-lingering, programme. Khaddar may stay the life of non-co-operation. But that is all. To reduce the nation into an

armed camp, to engage the mighty bureaucracy arrayed against us, and ever elert to give battle, some catastrophic stimulus, something infinitely more dynamic and devastating than the Charkha sound must be found. The idea of unity—unity inter-communal and inter-religious—is potential of this."

CHAPTER XXVI

COCANADA CONGRESS

Even in other respects, the Cocanada Congress resulted only in deep disappointment for Gopalakrishnayya.

Though at the time of the Congress sessions Gopalakrishnayya was busily engaged with his secretarial duties, he made a unique proposal, viz., of holding a *Saptaham* or the 'Seven Days' Feast', the principal part of which was the free feeding of the lakhs of visitors attending the function. This is quite a common religious affair in the country; but the calculating captains of the Congress Reception Committee higgled about it a while and at last gave it a decent burial. That the Congress, to this day, is unable to universalise this tradition shows how deeply rooted the 'National' movement is in foreign inspiration; and even the efforts of a Gopalakrishnayya to revive, through the Congress, our ancient traditions have been quite unavailing.

The same conclusion must be irresistibly drawn from the fact that the Cocanada Congress, even more effectively, betrayed the Ramadandu idea in the organisation of its volunteers. The Congress, having to assemble large concourses of people, had to experiment in mass direction and control; and for the conduct of every Conference or Congress, not to speak of the ultimate steps of mass civil disobedience and universal non-payment of taxes, a sort of trained volunteerism became necessary, for which purpose various forms were devised by the various Congressional agencies, the most favoured being the earlier Scout idea; the later

Hindustani Sevadal, and the all-pervading Volunteer corpsism. And it will serve a useful purpose if we examine them a little in this context.

To take up the last first, the Volunteer, it is well-known, is a limb of the Western military organisation, being that part of the army which, as apart and distinct from the standing militia or the trained mercenary, was recruited in times of travail, on a voluntary basis, from the mass of the people, for the rescuing of the nation at its hour of trial and danger. And the most important point to remember about it is that the Volunteer also is an "armed animal", fully equipped with deadly weapons, engaged in killing and getting killed, alongside the regular army; and the organisation was distinctly martial, as apart from the Red Cross or other such purely peaceful associations of the West, intended for the health and healing of the maimed and the dying among the wounded soldiery.

Now this was the idea which our "National" Congress has taken up in its "peaceful and legitimate" efforts to establish Swaraj in India; and while its voluntary basis has been adopted in toto, the organisation was non-violenced and the volunteer deprived of his arms. In other words, our leaders borrowed a product of the pure military life of the West; and in their eagerness to reach their goal by more "righteous" means than those of the "atrocious" and "barbarous" modernity, and cut off the arms of this equally militant volunteer, who has therefore come to us as the bare trunk without the arms, who has to receive all the lathi blows and the bullet wounds and yet not retaliate, nor even suffer manfully, as in the truly Indian *Bhagavatamarga*.

Thus our recent Volunteerism is one other of the Western forms which the 'Nationalistic' India has striven to adopt and ineffectually imitate because of its half-hearted importation. And this accounts why an alien Raj in India, which could easily grasp the inner *raison detre* of this, Indian Volunteerism, because it is based upon their own models and even couched in their language—volunteers, war-councils, dictators, raids, marches and what not—could easily put it down and virtually succeed.

in breaking open the 'nationalistic front' in almost all cases. Because it is their own organisation *Minus* its arms, they could easily detect its motive; because it was powerless, they could break it up by a simple Section 144 or gagging order or a declaration as an unlawful assembly, following it up with a lathi charge, to which inevitably the volunteers would succumb.

From the Volunteer Corpses to the Hindustani Sevadals it is but a step; for the one is an imitation with the original name in English intact, while the Sevadals are an exact, nay, a fuller expression of this slave-principle, for it is well known that a corpse is called a *Sevam* (శవము) in our language. And it is a bit of tragic irony that the land which has produced a Ramadandu should have given sanction to those *Sevadalamulu*—lifeless corpses—because it may be remembered that this Hindustani Sevalal was the direct offshoot of the Resolution IV of the Cocanada Congress, which, "in order to train the people of India and make them effective instruments for the carrying out of the national work," welcomed the movement "for the formation of an All-India Volunteer Organisation," viz., the Hinustani Sevalal. And the inglorious career which attended this movement since its inception, in spite of the active backing up by the Congress bodies, is perhaps worthy of its foreign inspiration; and, after a recent effusion into the formation of a Women's Branch of the Dal in 1930, which yielded some fine prey to the British jails, the movement has practically ebbed away at the first sight of the enemy during the recent second shock.

And Scouting! That valiant plant (like the croton trees) of our Theosophist friends, of whom our Mr. Iyyanki Ramanayya was perhaps the first and last convert in Andhra. It is not known if Scouting will receive hereafter in India that universal homage, which its authors (both British and Indian) wish it should have. But as some of our schools and colleges—the former particularly—are experimenting with the idea on a large scale, in its two-fold aspect of the Boy Scout and the Girl Guide, we may yet have a garden of these fruitless, flowerless, infructuous shrubs, which may please the eye because of some colour

which they possess; but their whistles are as shrill as our harmoniums and their batons as lifeless as our gramophones. We believe the Scout idea has been conceived for our Indian mendicants in order to perpetuate the British domination over India; because the Scout stick can but render homage, at best form a guard of honour, to the mighty British arms which, however, either the sword or the rifle, our Indian fellow subjects dare not aspire after at least for a good bit of time to come, that is to say, till our slavery becomes deep-rooted, chronic, and proof even for guns or ammunition.

We have already discussed the subject of Gopalakrishnayya's Ramadandu in an earlier chapter; and the reader may remember its presence at Bezwada, as early as March 1921, at the time of the A. I. C. C. meeting. It was ignored at first from an official participation in the Congress reception; but after the volunteer organisation had broken down, Gopalakrishnayya was asked to rescue the meeting, which he did in a wonderful manner, with the help of his Ramadandu. He followed this preliminary success by establishing its usefulness in his famous Chirala campaign, and the great success with which he revived it both as an incentive to vigorous, albeit peaceful, action and as an effective control of the forces of enthusiasm, is borne out not only by the verdict of history, but by the unsolicited testimony of many an impartial observer, like the late G. R. Das, Mahatma Gandhi, the Ali Brothers, S. Sreenivasa Iyengar, Swami Shraddhananda, Madan Mohan Malavia, Dr. Moonji, E. Raghavendra Rao, etc. In fact, Ramadandu became a classical tradition in Andhra; and it is no wonder if the president-elect of the Cocanada Congress, the late Maulana Mohammed Ali, as soon as he alighted at the Samalkot railway station, greeted his distinguished hosts with the query; "Where is your Red Army?" meaning the Ramadandu, robed in red colour.

It was, of course, open to the Cocanada Reception Committee—nay, it was their duty—to have called in the 'Red Army' for taking charge of the work of the Congress reception; but when the time for organisation came, the Reception Committee,

just as they executed themselves over the *Saptaham* proposal, also gave up the Ramadandu idea; and instead, raised a cumbersome Volunteer organisation, with its khaki shirts and the famous Gandhi cap in place of the Andhra turban. For this exhibition, one is tempted to ask, how is khaki dearer, or at least nearer their traditional colour, which was the illustrious Red of the Ramadandu robes? and how the flat Gandhi cap, despite its simplicity and cheapness, was more national or becoming a 'national volunteer corps' than the flowing waves of a curling turban?

One argument which was subsequently advanced against the Ramadandu by that other moving figure of the Cocanada Congress, the esteemed Bulusu Sambamoorthy, is that Ramadandu, being a product of the Hindu tradition, might be unacceptable to the Muslims, the Sikhs and other religious denominations in the land, because they might, in that case, insist upon their own variations in the national organisation. The criticism is a serious one; and therefore, has to be answered at this stage.

But before going to the point directly, one may be pardoned for asking what these critics of the Ramadandu had themselves achieved to bring about Hindu-Muslim-Sikh, etc., unity in their volunteer organisation. For, at the self-same Cocanada Congress, the Sikhs had come all the way from the Punjab, to exhibit their Akali Jathas, with their flowing beards and black turbans, short Kripans and even their free kitchens! Yet not one of these Sikh friends would join the Congress Volunteerism! Then again, there were our Mohammadan fellow-countrymen, who constitute but a very small per cent of Andhra; yet they would not join the blessed National Volunteers, and, instead had their own Khilafat Volunteers, among whom possibly there were a few Hindus, and even their independent Khilafat Flag in the Congress grounds, flying on a par with the Tri-colour and the Charkha.

Therefore, those who criticised the Ramadandu as sectional or communal could not achieve anything other than a sectional organisation in practice. Yet we would be untrue to ourselves and to the Ramadandu cause, if we should try to snub its critics

by merely pointing the finger of scorn at their own non-achievement, though one is certainly entitled to ask what the detractors themselves had done or are doing at the shrine of the so-called All-India National Volunteerism. We will, therefore, put in the case for the Ramadandu more positively and definitely, so that all further criticism against it on the ground of first principles may be effectively silenced.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, the most sacred of our scriptures, says : " It is best to follow one's own law of being ; it is death to follow an alien *Dharma*." And the dictum is binding even where a *Swadharma* is colourless and ineffectual ; while a *Paradharma*, which may even be full of colour and quality, has got to be eschewed—is positive death itself—is full of *Bhayam*—has got to be dreaded like Hell.

And yet our friends of the National Congress discard their own native and traditional form of the Ramadandu, which is, mark, not a colourless, fruitless form, but the most rich of colour and rich of substance also ; in fact, its achievement being incomparably greater than that of any other organisation in Andhra, nay, even outside Andhra, stimulating like the Sun, a Savarkar in his exile, a Sraddhananda to work up a *Hamuman dal* and *Mahavira dal* ; and even our latest Satyagrahis to their *Vanarasena* which is but an apologetic adaptation of our glorious Ramadandu ideal ; and they follow the most useless stuff from the West, in a hybrid and mutilated form ! And this fundamental *Gita* standpoint, therefore, is the prime justification for the Ramadandu.

Gopalakrishnayya's idea of these volunteers, it may be remembered, was not an aggressive one, in the sense that it wanted to efface the other systems or religions from this globe ; but each should form a unit on the basis of one's own denominational outlook and faith—the Hindus forming their Ramadandu ; Christians their Red Cross ; Muslims their Mahfuzl Islam ; the Sikhs their Akali Jatha ; and under their local or sectional leaders, these units should function in quiet comraderie, as one man, because their purpose is one, viz., health and healing, freedom and

salvation. Thus, in an army of 1,000 Hindus and 100 Muslims, say, you might form 50 units of the Ramadandu and 5 of the Mahfuzl Islam, and all the 55 units shall march in one line, side by side, to liberate their country or to relieve humanity of its woes. But the Congress friends have missed this essential fact of life, viz., the value of one's traditional idealism in the working of our organisations; and they have been attempting to work up an elaborate scheme of trained volunteerism, which is fast becoming one other of the many castes and creeds of India; and all their busy Boards and plans of training, disciplining, equipping and journalling may fully occupy their time and the time of other idlers in the country; but it is doubtful if any of these things will avail either for Swaraj or Swaaraj.

We have lingered so long on the absence of the Ramadandu at the time of the Cocanada Congress, because it offers a crucial test about the life and worth of our national gatherings. We shall now relate another performance of the Andhra leaders at the self-same Congress, which shows the same lack of faith and want of culture, and which elicited the following comment from Gopalakrishnayya's hands. Speaking of the Belgaum Congress of 1924, Gopalakrishnayya thus wrote in his *Sadhana*: "It is a welcome relief that the Chairman* uttered his speech in his own tongue—his instinct exercised itself straight and with taste. It was only given to the Andhras the opportunity of betraying themselves and their own language and literature. Translations can explain the thought, but the characteristic sound form alone reaches the soul."

The reference in the above to the betrayal of the Andhras was to 'Desabhakta' K. Venkatappayya's performance, as Chairman of the Reception Committee at Cocanada in December 1923. That esteemed patriot read his welcome address, in faltering tones, in halting Hindi; and in spite of the daily rehearsals in the early hours of the morning for a fortnight or more, he floundered in the middle and broke it off after it was half-done, and finished it with the aid of an English conclusion!

*Sree Gangadhara Rao Deshpande.

Gopalakrishnayya's main record of his Congress secretaryship, we have already seen, was that he had successfully steered the A. I. C. C. through two meetings and two Congress sessions; and he had also done much to bring the two wings of the Congress to a close compromise at the Delhi and Cocanada sessions. For this no mean achievement, one would expect that he should have a chance of re-election as General Secretary. And there was a convention also in those days that one of the secretaries should be from the Province where the Congress session was held. But the Andhra leaders conspired to see that Gopalakrishnayya was not elected as even a member of the A. I. C. C. It was all done in the dark, while he was away in the Punjab on Congress duty, nor were they able to benefit themselves thereby, securing a secretaryship for any other body.

Gopalakrishnayya's was the one instance when the A. I. C. C. office was brought to the Andhradesa; but the Andhra leaders had shamefully betrayed themselves. Gopalakrishnayya himself gave expression to his feelings on this incident to a Press interviewer soon after the Cocanada Congress thus :

"I am afraid, I am not very much in need just now for the Congress. Don't anticipate. I am not alluding to the clever kindness of our Provincial Congress Committee in wishing me off of its A. I. C. C. elections to a further term of secretarial office in due sanctimonious observance of a time-honoured superstition. If you can pardon a bit of my egoism, there is not a situation which can claim its toll from a person like myself and also there is not likely to be one until something turns up from far away. And there is also no knowing I have not made a serious mistake in taking to politics. I wish to repair post-haste to the blissful regions of obscurity which would incidentally give me the much-needed rest and, who knows, clearer vision and a more appropriate vocation."

CHAPTER XXVII

PERIOD OF CONFERENCES

Cocanada Congress had come and gone; no-change and pro-change had met and compromised; but Gopalakrishnayya's dream of "a grand social convulsion" through the Congress was as far from India in January 1924 as ever. The cessation of the A. I. C. C. secretaryship meant for him a change, definitely and for good, from All-India politics to more domestic matters, mostly relating to himself and his province, a change which he himself declared as "from politics to obscurity." The process, however, was a gradual one; and, from January 1924 to June that year, despite his determination, to the contrary, became a 'Period of Conferencing' in his life, and there was no other period in his life when he took part in so many meetings and public gatherings as during this period. And there were two reasons for this external activity about this time.

First was the sudden and unexpected release of Mahatma Gandhi, in January 1924, owing to illness. Gandhiji was sentenced in March 1922 for six years imprisonment; but in January 1924, the Government of Bombay ordered his release when he fell seriously ill with appendicitis. A wave of enthusiasm spread all over the country; and, in Andhradesa, it was proposed that the occasion should be fittingly celebrated by the collection of a lakh of rupees as a purse in honour of Gandhiji, and Gopalakrishnayya had his own part to play in this collection task.

But there was an inner reason also for his active participation in public life at this time. For, it may be remembered that, as soon as he came out of jail in 1922, he went round the Andhra districts, carrying aloft the banner of Brahminism; but

his A. I. C. C. secretaryship intervened with his work and throughout the year 1923, he had no occasion to take up this work any further. And after his A. I. C. C. career, he felt the need to mobilise all the national forces on a broad and integrated basis. Thus he found it necessary to apply himself to such activities, besides the Congress, as Volunteers, the Library movement, journalism, and even the Local Boards and Legislative Councils.

The first conferences presided over by Gopalakrishnayya in the early months of 1924 were two or three taluk gatherings in his own district, held at Bapatla, Repalle and probably at Guntur; and they were all in connection with the Gandhi purse collections. In every place, he exhorted his hearers to the usual constructive programme; and in every place, he was responsible for the appointment of a *Deeksha Sangham*, that is, a committee pledged to raise the prescribed quota of Rs. 5,000 or 6,000 from the taluk and not to return home till the work was finished. The members were to go from village to village, and from door to door, with *Bhajana* and music, continuously, till the amount was realised. Detailed instructions were laid down for the people of each village to receive those 'public beggars' with due honours and the *Sreemukham* issued under his presidential authority, both in theory and in practice, was inviolable. It was no wonder therefore that, in the taluks where he gave the lead, even dead villages began to animate; and while all the twelve districts of Andhra combined could not raise more than 15 or 16 thousand Rupees for the fund, Gopalakrishnayya alone, with the aid of these *Deeksha Sanghams* in two or three taluks, could collect within a short time, more than Rs. 8000. The instance is noteworthy to show how 'Religion reinforces our Politics.'

Another instance where Gopalakrishnayya succeeded and others failed was also in connection with the Gandhi release. A day was fixed by the Congress for thanks-giving for the release and recovery of their great leader. And curiosity drove him from Chirala to see how Bezwada—the Andhra capital—would celebrate the occasion. But what was his surprise! When, after alighting at the station, and passing through almost deserted streets to the Gandhi Park, where barely a hundred or two

were assembled and were about to disperse after passing an empty resolution of thanks! The gathering was about to disperse when Gopalakrishna put in his appearance, and after exchange of a few greetings with the elite, he walked up to the dais and announced, in his own characteristic manner, that the proceedings would be adjourned till next evening when greater members should muster to do homage to the Mahatma, and that, in the meanwhile, a *Gandhi Prabha* would go round the city the next day.

A *Prabha* literally means 'Greatness' or 'Fame,' and *Prabhala Thirthams* or meeting places of those Prabhas are the rendezvous for thousands, sometimes even lakhs of pilgrims, and they even serve as places for the barter or exchange of many an article of daily use for the people.

Now it was such a day that Gopalakrishnayya conceived for the celebration of the Gandhi triumph—the emergence really of a Gandhi spirit from out of the British jails and even of death, and he wanted those who were gathered there, to build a *Gandhi Prabha* for the next day, with the leader's photo seated on it, and take it in procession through the city, with music and song, receiving *Arathis* (or light offerings), rice, fruits, flowers and coin, *en route* from almost every house. The whole city thus had a gala day; and by the evening, not only every citizen knew of Gandhi's triumph, and had rendered his humble homage or at least a respectful *Darshan* of the semblance of the great Mahatma; but the Congress Committee got a handsome eight or nine hundred rupees for the *Gandhi Puja Nidhi*, and at least 10,000 people attended the evening's meeting, and even the Police were there punctually that day.

It was in May 1924 that Gopalakrishnayya was invited to preside over the first Godavari District Volunteer Conference at Alamur, held alongside the district political and other conferences; and the presidential address delivered by him on the occasion, dealing with the nature and functions of national volunteerism, makes thoughtful reading. Glorious scenes were witnessed in the conference which it is impossible to adequately portray here; but

reference may be made to one aspect of it, where Gopalakrishnayya, in a solemn and impressive manner, burned camphor to the gods on high, uttered his usual *Ramaramana Govindo Hari* and made his audience mutter the *Mantra*, and, with a plate of red *Kunkuma* in his hand, he made every one of the audience wear the 'caste mark' before the proceedings commenced, and thus fitted them to share the function with their true nationality about them. It was a sign, evidently, of the wholesale conversion which he wanted to effect eventually.

From Alamur, Gopalakrishnayya proceeded to Madugula, to preside over the Visakhapatnam District Conference. That meeting was a purely political affair, assembled under the auspices of the District Congress Committee, and its purpose was to work up the chief programme of the Congress, which was summed up by the Bardoli Constructive Programme.

This Constructive Programme, to which reference has already been made more than once in these pages, was the offshoot of Resolution III of the Congress Working Committee which met at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th February 1922, and *inter alia* reads as follows: After suspending the non-co-operation movement, with a view to perfecting the internal organisation,

"The Working Committee advised all Congress organisations to be engaged in the following activities:

1. To enlist at least one crore of members of the Congress;
2. To popularise the spinning wheel and to organise the manufacture of hand-spun, hand-woven Khaddar;
3. To organise national schools;
4. To organise the depressed classes for a better life;
5. To organise the temperance campaign;
6. To organise village and town Panchayats;
7. In order to promote and emphasise unity among all classes and races and mutual good-will, the establishment of which is the aim of the movement of non-co-operation, to organise a social service

department that will render help to all irrespective of differences, in times of illness or accident;

8. To continue the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund collections.

Gopalakrishnayya tried to interpret this programme in his own unique way. And on the question of unity, he said : "The question of national unity in our land is as old as the hills. Akbar the Great tried it. The great Nanak tried it. They tried to hit upon a formula, one political, one social, and other religious, to induce all discord, difference and division, to converge all into a living homogeneity; i.e., to a unity with its diversity inhibited." But his interpretation must have been unacceptable, in several respects, to many an erudite Congressman; and therefore he was careful to notice that the solution of that unity was to be obtained on "other platforms than that of the Congress."

In the same month (May 1924) Gopalakrishnayya conducted a Ramadandu rally or a training camp for the Andhra Provincial Ramadandu at Kovvur near Rajahmundry. The occasion was the celebration of a *Rama Saptaham* at Kovvur, where *Bhajana* and *Kirtan*, music and song, minstrelsy and *Puja* were continuously in session for an entire week. Thousands of visitors came there every noon and night, and all the visitors were freely fed during that week, the cost being borne by public charity. Gopalakrishnayya decided to utilise the occasion for his Ramadandu cause; and, under the auspices of the Provincial Volunteer Board, he therefore organised a rally at the place.

Gopalakrishnayya was at Kovvur in all for a fortnight, inspiring, instructing and guiding the whole scheme. Among those present were Sjts. Unnava Ramalingam Pantulu of Berhampore, G. Hari Sarvothama Rao, and Sree Iyyanki Venkata Ramanayya, all members of the Provincial Volunteer Board. The principal part of his work was the formation of the Dandu; the training of the "soldiers"; hoisting of the *Zenda* (Flag); the initiation of the *Mantram*; planting of the "green bunch"; and a procession.

The Dandu was formed with about fifty or sixty volunteers who had come from the different districts of Andhra. A few sheds were erected for their accommodation in a garden adjoining the Andhra Girvana Vidyalayam; and the training included some drill, speeches, reading and *Bhajana*; and at the end of the course, there was the function of dedication or consecration. The soldiers were all taken to the river in the early hours of the dawn; and after a refreshing bath in its waters, a *Mantra* was given to each of the worshippers; and after breakfast, the consecration ceremony was carefully planned and celebrated. For this purpose, a pillar was erected at the top of which a tastefully decorated flag—the *Hanumat-dhwaja*—was raised; and every one bowed before the flag and saluted it.

An important incident of the day was the “planting of the green bunch.” After their return from bath, these Dandu soldiers were asked to pluck out a bunch of green leaves and to wear it on their breasts. The green bunch evidently was the “Star” of the Ramadandu and its significance was explained as follows: The plant represents the great tree of life; each twig is typical of a human soul; the chopping of the twig from the tree is symbolic of the human mind wrested from the material path of a bounded life and setting it on the path of *Moksha*. The greenness is symbolic of the freshness of these nascent buds of life; and these people thereafter were to walk with a beaming and merry freshness, like the tiny twigs adorning their breasts.

Sometime during this period, Gopalakrishnayya also presided over the Andhradesa Libraries' Conference held at Pamidipadu Agraharam, and his address on the occasion is a profoundly interesting document, with a vigorous criticism of the Library and the Museum habits of the present day practice.*

*The Alamur and Pamidipadu addresses, together with extracts from his Madugula address will be found published in the “Essays and Addresses” of the Andhraratna.

The month of June 1924 for Gopalakrishna was mostly a period of hibernation, at Bezwada, interspersed now and then, with plans of Chirala lands or financial worries, now of a chronic malaria, which possibly be picked up as early as 1921 in his trip to Anantapur, but which had taken deep root by this time; and, too, with subdued schemes of starting an English weekly and a Telugu daily, which, however, were receding farther and farther, the more he was trying to get near them.

Such, briefly, was his position on the eve of the meeting of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee in July 1924, which forms a landmark in his career.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A. P. C. C. MEETING OF JULY 1924

The July meeting of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee was an important one from more than one standpoint. The general conditions obtaining at that time were briefly as follows. After the suspension of the non-co-operation movement and the return of the leaders and workers from jails in 1922, it was practically the first meeting in Andhradesa for taking stock of the situation in the country. The year 1923 was spent in organising the Cocanada Congress—for which purpose the Congress routine was practically suspended; and the release of the Mahatma inaugurated a new period of activity throughout the country.

In the life of Gopalakrishnayya himself, the meeting served as an occasion for supreme introspection, for he had abandoned himself in the non-co-operation movement of 1921; and even after his return from jail, instead of reverting from politics to realities, he accepted the A. I. C. C. secretaryship just at the time when he was planning for an honest and honourable means

of livelihood—through press and papers, in July 1923; and, after pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of a Congress unification, he became not only poorer in purse, but, owing to the intrigues of his no-change friends in Andhra, even discredited and maligned.

As an instance of this propaganda against him, may be cited the following letter of Gandhiji himself, addressed to Gopalakrishnayya about this time. Thus writing on 4-7-1924 from Sabarmati, the Mahatma told Gopalakrishnayya: "I had a long chat with 'Desabhakta.' He is of opinion that you will not work in an organisation. I do wish you will find yourself and your proper place in the movement."

On the eve of the Provincial Congress Committee meeting, a band of these Andhra no-changers ranged themselves openly to vilify the fair name of Gopalakrishnayya and so disgrace him for purpose of hounding him out of the Congress circles. The house itself was fully packed by these determined members; and the rest of the gullible variety were being tutored about the misdeeds of Gopalakrishnayya.

At this stage, it has also got to be remembered that our political life at this time was itself ailing from want of adequate faith. Out of a nation of two crores of Andhras, in 1921, a couple of hundreds had gone to jail—at best a thousand, and, when compared with the figures, say, of a northern town in Scotland of 10,000 souls, which sent, in the First World War, more than 1,100 men actually to the front, it will be realised how really small was our aim and endeavour in the cause of our freedom, engendered in 1921-22. And even in July 1924, the condition of "Thus far and no further" in matters of faith and sacrifice were reigning galore in the citadels of the Andhra Congress.

In the course of that meeting, Gopalakrishna made a clean breast of his mind, and, at the outset, explained that the country could be best served not by any half-way houses of semi-sacrifice or "suffering as much as possible"; and, adverting to the circumstances in the country since Mahatmaji's "call to arms,"

that is, to dare or die, he proceeded to examine the personnel of the Congress Executive in Andhra, which was, frankly, limited in self-reliance; and to illustrate his position, he instanced the case of the President of the Committee, who was still 'progressing' in faith and complete self-surrender, and he suggested that the house might relieve him of the job, and elect one with lesser pretensions but was more faithful and dedicated. He reminded the house that, without a dedicated and determined comradeship on their side, it was useless to try to meet the mighty adversary in the country; and he added that, in case his proposition was rejected, he would take it that the house was still for the continuance of a plutocratic leadership, that the time for the coming of a poor man, like himself, into the movement was not yet; and in that view, he would, in all humility, venture to seek a more appropriate vocation for himself, so that he could thereby serve at least himself, if not the country. But if the house was for a policy of a fuller faith in the cause, he, for one, would not mind damning himself once again, and go the whole-hog for it.

It is thus clear that Gopalakrishnayya stood for a purification of our Congress life; but he was out-voted by two-thirds majority, whereupon he announced his resignation from the Andhra Congress and walked out of the meeting and retired to his house. Gopalakrishnayya's resignation created a stir in the house; some were sorry; others were perplexed, and there were also those who were pleased that, after all, they had got rid of a very inconvenient person from their midst. And, as their mouthpiece, one member rose and moved that "The house do immediately accept the resignation of Mr. Gopalakrishnayya."

To be sure, this last performance dumbfounded a section of the house, who were not adapted to the Congress practices before; and they felt that both justice and the fair name of the house demanded that the rashness of the elders should be defeated; one member moved that the matter be adjourned till the next morning, and, in the meanwhile, some intermediaries be sent to Gopalakrishnayya to wean him from his resolve.

The catastrophe was thus averted for the day; and, in a subdued atmosphere, the house proceeded with the rest of the business. The next item was the election of the Secretariat and the Executive. At that time, there were one General Secretary and two 'dummy directors', that is, two more secretaries who held that position nominally. To ensure uniformity and efficiency of administration, it was proposed that there should be only one post for the year; and it was acceded to, without any opposition.

Two names were thereupon proposed for the post, and both of them had excellent claims. One was Gopalakrishnayya who had been till lately the General Secretary of the A. I. C. C., and the other was Mr. Sambamurty, who had been General Secretary of the Cocanada Congress Reception Committee and was an equally strenuous and self-effacing, though not such a brilliant worker as Gopalakrishnayya. But Sambamurty declined the offer, in spite of great pressure from friends; and the field was thus clear for the unopposed return of Gopalakrishnayya as the sole Secretary.

But when it became inevitable that Gopalakrishnayya would thus become the A. P. C. C. Secretary, the elders began to think, and they made the house revert to the triple secretaryship idea. And it was then decided to have three secretaries, instead of one. It was a question not of efficiency now, but of personal equating. If Sambamurty was there, one would suffice; but, with Gopalakrishnayya as inevitable, there should be two more to bag the game.

Here, again, Providence provided a test. For the choice of the three secretaries, three names were proposed, among which Gopalakrishnayya's was of course one. For a long time, there were no other proposals; the president called for any more names and rang the bell; but there were none. The time for nominations was over, and the president stood up to announce the unopposed return of the three secretaries. But just at that time, Dr. P. S. hinted a few minutes adjournment; glided up to Mr. Sambamurthy to request him to stand; but when he refused, Mr. A. K. (who had been thrice approached

previously but thrice refused) was set up; and thus for three seats, there were four names. Elimination of Gopalakrishnayya, however, was out of question; and he still came in as one, though he himself was absent from the house. And the cleverness of the leaders ousted a poor non-Brahmin from Madras, who should otherwise have been there.

The leaders thus did their best to keep out Gopalakrishnayya from the Committee; but when that was found not possible, as a last resort, they tried the strength of their numbers, and pitched upon Mr. Kaleswara Rao as their nominee for the chief secretaryship. The house by that time had become half-tired and half-deceived; and Mr. Kaleswara Rao was elected to the chief secretary's place.

The news of his election was communicated to Gopalakrishnayya; and Sjt. Sambamurty and two others went to his place to induce him to accept the newly proffered secretaryship. Gopalakrishnayya was not unwilling to hearken to reasonable persuasion; and had no objection to reconsider his resignation, if his services were really required. He, however, opined that the proffered secretaryship, or a second to Sjt. Kaleswara Rao, seemed to be rather a dummy affair; and, if it was proposed to be given him as a *sine cure* for his past services, then he would have none of the kind, because he could, if need be, "wipe off his own tears," and a consolation prize to him was unnecessary. On the other hand, if he was assured that his services were really required, then, he was prepared to come back; and, as a test, he instanced that if the administration of certain departments, like National Education, Ramadandu (Volunteers) and National Service *Desaradhaka Brundamu*, was entrusted to him, he would cheerfully accept their responsibility. The intermediaries felt satisfied with that position; took a letter of qualified withdrawal, couched in the above terms; and returned to the meeting.

Gopalakrishnayya's letter was conceived in a spirit and couched in a language which was far beyond the comprehension of the house which had assembled to decide his destinies; and it was therefore, easily misunderstood by some and misinterpreted by

others, a section of whom again proposed that Gopalakrishnayya's resignation be accepted forthwith, adding now a clause that his letter was an 'insult' to the house, which would not brook any dictation from outside !

A suggestion was made at that stage that Gopalakrishnayya might be sent for to explain his letter and his conduct of the previous day. The proposal received general consent from the several impartial, who were shocked at the conduct of the 'big guns' and were anxious that an honourable compromise should be arrived at, but it raised a flutter in the dove-cotes of the elders ; and even the biggest of them began to sulk, though they dared not openly lead an opposition and silently mumbled away their helplessness.

Gopalakrishnayya was thus sent for. He came ; and gave a detailed explanation of the contents of his letter. Adverting to the alleged 'insult' to the house, he expounded his views on "Our parliamentary privileges", saying that, according to the Indian tradition, the 'Sabha' was a manifestation of Divinity ; and he dared not 'insult' anybody, much less God. He also explained that, according to our tradition, one was at liberty to address a Sabha, in the language of Kavi Choudappa, with ten moral and ten obscene sayings, if need be ; and even if something strange or out-of-the-way in his language or conduct was to be noticed, it was in accordance with our traditional "Privileges" of a Sabha, and no "insult" was meant to anybody, and least of all to the house. But if anybody should still feel hurt, he would apologise to the house, for the Sabha was a manifestation of God ; and, so saying, he prostrated himself before the gathering.

The scene was a soul-stirring one ; and it moved everybody who was present, barring the determined clique. The house, however, agreed to accept the terms of Gopalakrishnayya ; and entrusted to him the three departments mentioned in his letter. It was a nominal victory for him, however, as we shall see presently ; but it was there for what it was worth, and was acquiesced in as the best under the circumstances. The elders were still reluctant, but had to give way for the time being.

The one outstanding feature of the meeting was the revelation of the extent of persecution which Gopalakrishnayya was subjected to by the elite of the Andhra Congress. And if further proof is necessary, it may be cited here that, though Gopalakrishnayya belonged to Guntur, he was not even elected to the Provincial Congress Committee from that district, and perhaps that was intended to "cut the Gordian knot!" The ostensible plea was, that Gopalakrishnayya had not paid his four-anna fee for the P. C. C. elections. But that was perhaps no reason why great destinies should be summarily dismissed. When he was thus ousted from the A. P. C. C. membership, it was through the indulgence of a friend from Bezwada, that Gopalakrishnayya could come up even to the Provincial Congress Committee. But an open rupture between him and the Congress organisation was somehow averted in that July 1924 meeting; and it will be interesting to notice how he fared in his new role of the 'Second Secretary' of the A. P. C. C.

CHAPTER XXIX

SOME P. C. C. AFFAIRS

In the Working Committee meeting of the A. P. C. C. held on 7-7-1924, it may be remembered that Gopalakrishnayya was entrusted with three departments of work, viz., (1) National Workers; (2) National Education; and (3) Volunteers, including the Ramadandu. And it will be profitable to review his endeavours in these departments, or rather, as to how far his aspirations were frustrated by the rest of the committee in actual realisation.

In regard to national service, the secretary could not appoint any 'workers,' nor fix their salaries or regulate their allowances; nor even take any steps to effectively control their movements or their work. All their reports had to be submitted to the 'Working Secretary,' who, if it pleased him, could forward them to his

colleague. Gopalakrishnayya could not regulate or interfere with the pay bills or the travelling allowances of these workers; and one instance, at least, was known wherein the salaries were enhanced without any reference either to the secretary-in-charge or even to the committee itself. Finance was in charge of the Working Secretary; and, as funds dwindled down, the ranks of the workers thinned away, and the department itself soon became non-functio.

Secondly, as regards national education. At the time we were speaking of, there were a number of these lower and higher national schools; and Gopalakrishnayya felt that they could have absolutely no future worth the name, if some system had not been devised; and accordingly he propounded a scheme whereby the Local Boards in Andhra would "immediately undertake the financing of the existing national schools unconditionally, leaving all questions of curricula, superintendence, discipline etc., in the hands of the local Congress organisations until such time as might be deemed necessary for safeguarding the strictly national character of these institutions." In the same scheme, he further elaborated his idea thus: "There are as many as a hundred national schools in the Andhra Province; and it is time that we consolidate the activities of these institutions and secure for them a common aim and governance. It is indeed a university we have to organise with these schools affiliated in the first instance and with some of the most important of them, such as the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala of Masulipatam and Sree Gandhi Maha Vidyalayam of Ellore, as its fully equipped university colleges. This would incidentally render unnecessary any Government effort in the matter of education and the abiding Congress view in this behalf will have been adequately realised. This can be accomplished only by a powerful participation of all the existing Boards and Municipalities in the Andhradesa."

This scheme had a tale to tell of itself; and as the instance was typical, we shall narrate its fate in some detail.

As soon as the P. C. C. meeting was finished on 7-7-1924, Gopalakrishnayya and Sjt. G. Harisarvothama Rao, together discussed the principles of the scheme for the capture and working

of the Local Boards and Municipalities in the Andhradesa; a rough draft was prepared and signed by both; and it was agreed that, after the final touches were given, it should be sent to Mr. Kaleswara Rao, the Working Secretary and the President, so that it might go out with the full authority and sanction of the Provincial Executive. The scheme itself was finally ready by the month end; and Gopalakrishnayya had even a casual talk about it with his Bezwada colleague, the Working Secretary. But while it was being got ready, the Working Secretary hurriedly drew up another scheme himself, without the knowledge either of Gopalakrishnayya or of Sjt. Harisarvothama Rao; got it printed overnight; and in spite of requests to postpone its issue, he despatched it post-haste—evidently not to miss the first prize from the public.

On its merits, the scheme of the Working Secretry was a commonplace plea for the capture of these Local Boards, and for their encouraging the Congress Constructive Programme of Khaddar, Untouchability, Hindi and National Education, etc., while that of Gopalakrishnayya aimed at a supreme effort for realising, what he called, "the imminent coalescence of all national effort," the first stage of which, so far as the locally self-governing bodies were concerned, was: (i) "A clear and firm declaration on the part of the existing Boards that the funds at their disposal is national property..." (ii) "In cases of defection, the electors shall bring into existence another Council or Board consisting of members freshly elected and pledged to carry on unflinchingly their wishes. And if the defecting Council refuses to yield, the electors must be induced to refuse the taxes to the said defecting Board and must be educated to transfer their allegiance to that of their own choice, to whom they shall entrust the carrying on of all business. This would entail the reopening of the question of mass civil disobedience and the nation can thus be rejuvenated on to the great sacrifice it has reserved for its Swaraj."

What Gopalakrishna aimed at thus was the thin end of the wedge of a really revolutionary principal and policy whose

effects it is hardly possible to exaggerate for a country-wide national movement. For fancy, a nation-wide campaign of Chirala-Perala all over India, declaring allegiance to Swaraj. And, what is more, in every town, taluk and district actually organising parallel Boards. And yet, this was the real import of a Gopalakrishna scheme of capturing our Local Boards; and how different it was from the Hindi-Spinning-Voting addresses or passing condemnatory resolutions scheme of the Working Secretary. And yet the latter had effectively prevented even a consideration of the scheme fraught with such far-reaching results.

Similar was the story of the "troubled fate" of Ramadandu. We have alluded to it more than once in the previous pages. For a long time it was not even recognised as a "peaceful and legitimate" organisation for national service. At last, it was "admitted" as one of the forms of "Volunteers" working under the Congress. In 1924, Gopalakrishnayya carried on a vigorous propaganda in its cause at Alamur, Madugula, Kovvur, etc., and even the Andhra Provincial Conference which met at Madras in October 1924, passed a resolution favouring the Ramadandu. Therefore, one would expect a glorious prospect for it, when Gopalakrishnayya became the Secretary-in-charge of Volunteers.

But "Volunteers" was in his portfolio; Finance was somebody else's. At first, he got an apologetic grant of a hundred or two; but there were four other members of the Volunteer Board to bind his discretion, and actually the departmental clerk was disbanded after the second month. Gopalakrishnayya proposed the publication of a Ramadandu scheme in Telugu and English; but the Board would not move after the Telugu version was completed. Likewise, he hoped to send a contingent of 1,116 Ramadandu volunteers to Belgaum, where Mahatmaji was to preside over the Congress sessions in December; but, as the Secretary-in-charge, he could not even consult the Reception Committee authorities on his proposal.

The above was apart from many other things of almost daily occurrence; and there was trouble over every trifling matter

where he was concerned. Every T. A. Bill of the secretary or of his assistant was made the topic of a controversy; the honorarium of his assistant was abolished within a few months—though the Working Secretary's assistant was to continue; and even the clerk was given the go-bye in December or January. The chief, of course, continued nominally; and after a sleepy existence for some more months, in May 1925, the records were taken away from him, and next month, he was formally ousted from his position—nay, he was not even elected to the Executive Committee for the next year!

CHAPTER XXX

REARRIVAL AT RAMNAGAR

Gopalakrishnayya, it may be recalled, went to Bezwada early in 1923 for starting some papers; and he had to stay there firstly owing to the A. I. C. C. work and latterly on the A. P. C. C. business. But now both of them had practically deserted him; and his health also began to fail at this time, so much so that a sort of "chronic malaria" began to trouble him; and all these made him think of going back to Ramnagar. And it was how it happened.

In October, 1924, despite ill-health, he had to undertake a trip to Madras in connection with the Andhra Conferences, which was of a varied interest. The conference itself was a tame affair, except for the interludes of mirth and merriment introduced by the President, Dr. C. R. Reddy and by Gopalakrishnayya in their speeches now and then. But there were two matters of interest to a reader of Gopalakrishna's story—and both of them were extra-conferential. One was relative to his health, and the other about an interesting, albeit pathetic, letter which he wrote to Mr. (afterwards Sir) Alladi Krishnaswami Ayya, who is well

known for his legal attainments as well as for his charities. Gopalakrishnayya was in need of help; and he desired to avail himself of his visit to Madras for seeing a few friends, among whom Alladi was one. An engagement was fixed, but Gopalakrishnayya was a bit indisposed, and therefore he wrote a letter and sent it through a friend. The letter was kindly returned by Krishnaswami Ayya, together with his contribution; and if Gopalakrishnayya was thankful to Mr. Ayya for the latter, posterity will be grateful for the gift of the letter itself, which is largely auto-biographical and which reads thus:

“I feel I can take advantage of my presence in Madras and renew my application for help. I am quite in the street, and need very urgent succour. It is just a human proposition, and based on no other fact or fancy. Once upon a time, you remember, I had approached you in the role of a canvasser of a limited company, and that has now blown off, as none would patronise that. That was just an attempt in the modern style to beg, and I little knew, that, to be successful in that, the beggar needs to be rich, and never poor. I now, therefore, try the style I inherited, the ancient style. And I won't beg of many, and this also is of the ancient form. Modernity to this extent, of course, I choose to adopt, viz., I won't be a perpetual beggar.

“The reason why I found myself in this style is very simple. I felt I was called upon to die when I had first joined the non-co-operation, but now I learn I have to live. This is a terrible prospect—especially for a dreamer, and particularly in these days. Dreamers were perpetual beggars in ancient times, and the nation had acknowledged responsibility for their weal. Nowadays a beggar himself is a problem and perpetual beggary, a species of insanity.

“I have been originally of very modest means, of which my education argued for a three-fourths, and the rest is answered by my ‘serving the country.’ I took none from the Congress funds, being too suspicious and superstitious. It always used to haunt my mind that 99 per cent of Congress funds is tainted, whatever this word may mean. And even as the losing gambler

who holds on to the play to the very last despite his terr drift to bankruptcy, I stuck on. But the moment has come when gamblers, cranks and madmen must make way to wisdom, and hurry back to their asylums or Asrams or Avasanams. I have one such thing at the above address (Ramnagar, Chirala P. O.). I feel it can be kept going by getting some three thousand rupees, all told. Anyway, I fancy, I can keep floating my own life with that capital, denying myself many hobbies, including the one of public or national service. I thought of approaching just a few gentlemen, who understand, in order to make this up. Success or failure, I shall try to be sane. I don't worry further. I would prefer a refusal from these, to help from an interested patron. Some of the big guns of Andhra National Service have been insanely jealous of me, and helped me to the present plight, by interfering with every attempt of mine to live—of course a life perfectly independent of their patronage. I don't curse them, as this helped me to reduce all my ambitions to their very legitimate proportions.

"I have now to look out, and you are one to look to. If you care to help me, kindly do it at once, as, I repeat, I am quite in the street. Don't expect in return anything but a blessing. Bolshevistik beggary can promise no dividends. I only ask leave to live. I feel you can bear with my intrusion."

There was another incident, relative to his health, which reveals the desperation to which he was reduced at this time. His health, we have already seen, was getting from bad to worse; and off and on he was having low fever, coupled with a little cough. Doctors diagnosed it as 'chronic malaria,' and treatment was prescribed accordingly. But a 'lay' friend who was with him had a half-suspicion that it might be tuberculosis. He did not desire to divulge his suspicions to Gopalakrishnayya directly. But he took the good Burra Satyanarayana of Madras into confidence, and the latter kindly arranged, through Col. Ganapat Rai, for an X-Ray examination in the Royapettah Hospital. It was desired that Gopalakrishnayya should stay for a day or two in the hospital for observation; and Col. Rai arranged

a seat in the European Ward, to which Gopalakrishnayya was admitted duly on the 27th October, at about 3-30 P. M. His friends left him at the hospital and came to Mr. Burra's house, which was barely a furlong off; and within five minutes, the patient was back to tell everybody, "he would rather go to jail than to hospital!"

The incident is important in that it prevented the only chance for an early diagnosis of the fell disease which was ultimately declared as such by doctors only twenty months later. The friend who was with Gopalakrishnayya, indeed, tried a number of times to get some expert opinion about his case; but every time either God or Gopalakrishnayya prevented a decision. The 'big Bhoy', Dr. M. of Amalapuram was begged to go and examine his illustrious friend; but his Taluk Congress work was more pressing and important! Doctor Gurumurthy of Rajahmundry, after many trials on his own part, came to Ramnagar, took two drops of blood on two glass slides for microscopic examination; but a thief stole the purse containing those slides as well as the Doctor's tickets and some money! Two more slides were sent subsequently by post; but they were broken in transit. Dr. P. S. who was consulted confidentially by the same friend examined Gopalakrishnayya and declared him about November 1924 as *not* tubercular; said it was a case of asthma; and recommended tobacco as a remedy. There were other attempts at getting at a correct diagnosis by "quack-doctors", as well as by degree-holders; and one brilliant M. B., B. S., in particular, repeatedly examined the blood and phlegm, and every time declared that it was full of malarial germs. And it was not actually till June 1926, when Lt. Col. T. S. Shastry came to Ramnagar and examined him and finally declared that it was a case of advanced tubercle.

Such, briefly, was the position of Gopalakrishnayya when he arrived at Ramnagar in November 1924.

Ramnagar! What a congeries of associations it raises in one's mind! What mixed feelings, of pleasure and of pain, of glory and of grief, of hope and disappointment! For it was the place of Gopalakrishnayya's aspiration, and at the same time. it

became the cremation ground of all his hopes—and actually the burning ghat of his physical frame! From one standpoint, it has the most expansive landscape of the sun, moon, air and water; yet it is also a mere and sheer desert. Here he conducted his glorious Chirala campaign; yet it all ended in miserable failure. Here he attempted once, twice and thrice, to build those temples and that Goshti which were the dream and ambition of his life; and here it was that they receded the more, the more he desired to see them realised. Here he longed to create that Kingdom of God which is the longing of the race, nay, of all humanity; but even the gods who were to preside over the Raj, in spite of every endeavour, chose to sink into the earth's bowels and remain there ever in the *Nirguna* state. Here it was that he came repeatedly, as to a hydro, to regain his lost health; but every time he came, he became worse, and he had to make an exit in spite of solemn resolves to "fix himself up in Ramnagar," till at last he settled down in Guntur and died. Lastly, it was here that his earthy bones and ashes had been mixed with their kindred dust; but it was also here that his glorious Spirit, like the Phoenix, had a resurrection and his birthday, Jayanti, has been celebrated year after year since his demise. A bundle of contrasts. Yet that is Ramnagar. And it is Life. And no wonder, that great man of Madras, Sriman S. Sreenivasa Iyengar who presided over the first year's Jayanti, fittingly declared:

"This place (Ramnagar) is sacred. The youth of Andhra must remember it. And the youth of other countries also."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE FEW FORLORN HOPES AT BEZWADA

After his rearrival at Ramnagar early in November 1924, Gopalakrishnayya settled a few preliminaries at home, commenced a regular course of treatment, and for a time it appeared as though he was recuperating. Then there were the personal affairs of selling some lands and repaying old debts which fully engaged his time and attention; and about the middle of November, he went to Bombay to attend the Unity Conference, where he joined the Swarajya Party. Next month, with the help of a small subsidy from the party, he tried to start the *Sadhana* and the *Rama-dandu*, an English and a Telugu weekly and tri-weekly respectively; and in pursuit of these "forlorn hopes," he spent another period of experimentation at Bezwada, and eventually came back again to Ramnagar. And here below is a brief resume of his journalistic venture of this period.

It may be remembered that Gopalakrishnayya desired to bring out these papers, both by name the *Sadhana*, one in English and the other in Telugu, as early as 1919 at Chirala; and he actually obtained permission from the authorities for their publication. But the political storms which had burst in the country soon afterwards wrecked the same; and when they were tried to be salvaged five years later, the Telugu journal was found altogether lost, while the English *Sadhana* had only a four-weeks' career, when it was finally lost.

The first issue of the *Sadhana* came out after much struggle, on the 26th December 1924; and *Sadhana*, a "Journal of National Idealism" introduced itself thus: "We make...no apology for launching out on the ocean of thought our little bark—the *Sadhana*. We are not unaware of the existence of many a strong

sea-worthy vessel, operating on the high seas, or gliding on the chartered track. We shall certainly profit by their fortunes. But let us be pardoned, we shall sail on our own right. We bow to the adept, we admire the expert, we comrade the alert, and we help the inert. If we are superfluous, the fault is of the Maker. If we are freshers, we deserve well of the public. And we shall sail on, undaunted by the cruel uncertainties of a prospect and unflattered by the generous indulgence of a fortune. Whenever we are in sight, we crave the indulgence of fellow-sailors, but ever demand the homage of the waves. We shall have humility enough to know the ocean is shoreless, unfathomable, unsafe. We shall have the courage to realise we have to sail, nevertheless. We shall be proud to receive admonition, humble to accept direction, but impudent to utter the truth—as, of course, it shows itself to us. Intolerant of the puritanic, and human towards the sinful, we shall conceal none of our infirmities, howsoever offensive to current taste. We shall test it by its capacity for accommodation, by its concern for conviction, by its yearning for life—life, exalted and debased, noble and mean, blessed and cursed, albeit life. We shall revere the past, fondle the future, but pursue the present, the present that is the concrete of time. We pose no proselytizers, we pursue no policies, and protest no poverty. We shall never be clever but ever be forgivers. We admit hate, if life-furthering, and shun love, if self-stultifying, but endeavour to adjust and aid both the creatures of Providence—even as the great Sankara did, one in the throat and one in the heart. Before Insolence Divine, we do bend; of the meanest of God's creatures we refuse not mercy. With the supreme conviction that we are but a tiny drop in the ocean, we beg leave to negotiate a humble neighbourliness of our environment."

In an article entitled "Our Ideal", he quoted the "traditional, abiding and unalterable hope of our race", conveyed in the *Swasti Vakyam*, which he described, as "Our National Anthem", "the refrain of all human endeavour in this part of the planet ever since man became conscious of the possibilities of his progress," and translated it thus:

*Peace be unto all people
May the Lords of the earth set their rule along
righteous paths
Plenty ever to Brahmin and cow
Bliss to all worlds.*

Paraphrasing it still further, he wrote: "To secure general weal, to ensure righteous rule, to build and shield the Brahmana and the cow; to invest all Lokas,—all states of existence or consciousness—with an active sovereignty of peace is the quintessence of the typical Indian aspiration. It need hardly be said, *This is our ideal.*"

Descending to realities, he proceeded to state: "But its translation into the realm of the practical and an enunciation of the resulting method and programme must be reserved to a future occasion. Suffice it here to say that we shall work, in our own humble way, for a synthesis of our cultural and social existence strictly in accordance with the moving spirit of the time and the agelong traditions of our race. In the realm of politics, we have set before ourselves to work for the Swarajist programme." "But at the same time" he was careful to add: "Our four years' experience, invaluable in itself, as relating to the social psychology of our people, showed that, unless we centralise or, what is the same thing, synthesise or religionise all the varied activities of the national life, giving indeed the social and educational aspects the necessary emphasis, we shall not be able to advance to any decent stage in our onward progress. To achieve any tangible gain even in the political effort, we feel, we must mobilise the activities of every conceivable type of reform, be it social, educational or cultural, so as to ensure strength and sufficiency to the movement. "The most immediate concern, next of course to our political work, is to reorganise and consolidate Hindu society. The general Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsee etc., unity is indeed an almost primary concern of everyone inclined to do his humble service to the country; but, we are sure, nothing tangible or substantial can be done in this direction unless and until the Hindu society is cleansed off its awful anaemia and utter ungodliness. And the

urgency of this task cannot be exaggerated." "Again, it bears repetition that Hindu society must first be attended to; and those of us who are Hindus will do well to look out, to look back and look deep into our historic consciousness—our *Karma*—and fix their gaze on our traditional form of aspiration. The only way to accomplish this is to rescue and rejuvenate Hindu society and to reorganise it in accordance with the great ideal *Advaita tattva* handed down to us through ages."

How near these words to those of Sree Aurobindo Ghosh just at this time. For the great Yogi is reported to have told Lala Lajpati Rai: "On one question, he (Sree Aurobindo) seemed to be fairly positive, namely, the necessity of organising and strengthening the Hindu community. As far as I remember, his own words were these: 'You must organise and strengthen the Hindu community without creating an atmosphere of hostility towards the Muhammadan community because, after all, both the communities have to live in India'." (1925)

Adverting to the methods in the same article, Gopala-krishnayya referred to Sri Sankara's *Advaita tattva*, and after pointing out that centuries have elapsed since the days of Sankaracharya and "the entire Hindu humanity has been enriched with such infinite variety of human experience that the time now seems ripe for another great and perhaps final effort to be forthwith undertaken." This "great and perhaps final effort" has been more clearly defined as "catastrophic overhaul of Indian society." ... Verily we have the movement and the men to sound the gong and summon the faithful to a hearty social embrace.

The first issue also contained an article on the "Men of the moment, that is, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Desabandhu Das and a reprint of his abortive Local Boards' Scheme referred to in a previous chapter. The paper was published at Belgaum when the Congress had just ratified the pact between the Swarajists and the no-changers, and the first issue placed in the hands of Gandhiji, whose blessings Gopala-krishna eagerly sought for, but never obtained!

The second issue came with just a week's holiday, due to his trip to Belgaum, and it was mostly a Congress number ; and in it too, there was really too much, if not of 'conferencing,' at least of conference reviewing. But the attempt to elevate even our congressional life to the level of idealism was there, in every line and every word of the issue. Thus, take any page. And we shall find the writer is discoursing more upon ideals than upon any Congress or conference resolutions. "When an organisation is about to evolve into an organism, the surest sign is an unreserved and unerring submission to the loving direction or possession of a personality, a personality that is not a mere pronoun." "Even as the appearance of prime integers at every evolutionary juncture of numerals, personalities appear for effecting the correct evolution." "Distrust of personalities is a chronic infirmity of every democracy." "Mahatma Gandhi is himself a 'Poem of Pity'." "Swaraj is the theme of a new Upanishad." "A gathering of 20,000 to 30,000 people is a divine presence." "The illumined facade in the Congress pavilion is an aesthetic improvement." "The Swaraj Congress will, we venture to prophesy, beat the splendour of a thousand Wembleys."

The third issue contained an article on what may be called the "Name of our new religion," that is, whether it should be "Hindu, or Arya, or Brahmin—Which?"—the discussion on which was continued in the next issue. The same number also began two series of articles on (1) national education ; and (2) the 'confessions of a convict'—the first of which was continued in the next issue, but the second was lost somewhere with the printers. The fourth number came a week late, owing evidently to the Editor's illness ; but even so, it was certainly "Better late than never." A reprint of his views on "Our Social Problem" is to be found in the fourth issue, which, unfortunately proved to be the last. In the meanwhile, Gopalakrishnayya's illness grew ; funds dwindled ; public support was lacking ; and there was none else to take his place. And thus *Sadhana* attained its *Siddhi*. Or as Gopalakrishna himself would say, want of *Sadhana* killed the *Sadhana*.

CHAPTER XXXII

FROM THE HUMAN TO THE DIVINE PATH

In the *Maha Bhagavatam*, there is an episode wherein the Elephant King, *Gajendra*, fought with *Makari* or the crocodile, for a long time—evidently it was a naval battle of those days—and when all his weapons were of no avail, he turned finally towards God and surrendered himself to His mercy. And similar was the plight of Gopalakrishnayya after the failure of all his worldly ventures.

About this time, he described his position in a letter to one, Sree Jagapati Varma, from which the following is extracted. "Ever since my release from jail, you are aware that I have propagated the gospel of a Universal Brahminism in various places. But excepting to two or three intimate friends of mine, the proposal was not even considered as worthy of attention by our people. To me, however, it became a passion of my soul, and though I tried to suppress it within myself, I found it irresistible and felt convinced that this is the most important of all our tasks before the country. I have endeavoured to withdraw myself completely from the political field, but after long waiting, when I at last freed myself to attend to this most pressing, sacred work, alas! I am struck down by Providence and rendered helpless by illness. And when every effort has thus failed, what struck me was that, being unable to meet my people and tell them about their primary Dharma, the only way of fulfilling my long-cherished mission is by building those temples of God who embodies the people, and to present my Brahmana Smriti within His hearing and to leave the world with an easy conscience." (Translated.)

Such, generally speaking, was the position after he gave up his papers and turned towards God and the temples, which

became a passion of his life ever afterwards. But we must examine the transition in slightly greater detail.

It may be remembered that, throughout January 1925, after he returned from Belgaum, Gopalakrishnayya was busy with the *Sadhana*; and on 2nd February, he started on a pilgrimage to Antarvedi in the Godavari district, where he was invited by the friends of the Rajole Congress Committee. His health was quite indifferent at this time; but all the same, he went, because it was *Ramakaryam* or God's work—and he went there with family. His hosts made the journey as smooth and comfortable as they could; all the same, he had to deliver two or three discourses; three public speeches; and endless conversation throughout that week's journeying in the district. But Gopalakrishnayya felt blessed, because he could pay his *Darsan* to Lord Narasimha, and perhaps he delivered to Him his own humble mission and submission, as he had done previously to Sree Ranganadha, and prayed for the destruction of all "Empires of egoism which desecrate this God's beautiful earth."

From Antarvedi, Gopalakrishnayya proceeded to Rajole, Amalapuram, Cocanada and Rajahmundry on a Swaraj Party mission. And even during this visit, he invited some friends to the temples installation ceremony at Ramnagar, whose date he would announce shortly. He returned home about the 12th February and on 19th he wrote: "The foundation ceremony of the two temples (Siva and Vishnu, under the names respectively of Ramalingeswaraswami and Sri Kodanda Ramachandramurti) has been fixed for the 5th of March, Phalguna Suddha Dasami, 9 A. M.

"Ours is not an institution which is to save or Swarajise a nation," he wrote, "nor is it an offspring of the Gandhian era and ethic or theology. It has been existing since pre-Gandhian times, though so far, in my dreams and the sands of Ramnagar. It is only now that I am vouchsafed freedom to devote myself to it. And I am determined to do it at all costs and even with no cost. And you will notice mine is too curious a method for the modern to feel comfortable at the thing. Fancy idols are to be the first

denizens of the village and the first members of the Goshti ! But so they are, whosoever notwithstanding, where I am concerned. If no help is forthcoming, I decided even on thatched sheds and clay basements for the idols. Idol is the concretised ideal."

"Our papers will appear in good time, God-willing," he continued. "Don't be anxious on their account. Don't you see the process is now to fix myself up in Ramnagar ? Everything else will turn out right afterwards...."

5th March was eventually changed to 7th, and even then there were small changes over the ceremony. The President-elect Sjt. K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu, could not attend the function, owing to illness, though his Rs. 116 was promptly there. Gopalakrishnayya himself could not perform the ceremony, as his wife was out of doors. He, however, wrote on the 10th, "The function went off alright. I am settled down to peace, though not plenty, but am thoroughly content with my lot."

The story of these temples or rather of the infructuous attempt at building these makes an instructive, albeit sad reading.

At first, Gopalakrishnayya hoped that his influence with the Chirala people would be able to get him the necessary funds ; but when he approached them, the richer of them began to excuse themselves, on one plea or another, because Gopalakrishnayya wanted his gods to be not mere sectarian or sectional objects of worship ; but universal gods, that is, open to all people of all castes, creeds and religions, irrespective of their birth, provided they had the faith and sought them with devotion and dedication. Some argued, some put forth silly excuses ; a few gave ridiculously small sums ; and even the one man who promised to build a temple for one of the gods, managed to evade. Meanwhile even the "Bowl" which had gone round had to return empty, owing primarily to the "politicians' mischief," some of the no-change friends of Andhra going the length of inventing arguments against the temple idea itself and saying : "Are there not temples enough in the country ?" and so forth ; and even the name of the Mahatma was dragged in for the purpose,

though Gandhiji himself repudiated that he was "wholly unaware of many things" mentioned by his lieutenants.

Thus neither Gopalakrishnayya nor his "Bowl" could get any money for those temples and consequently the programme had to go unfulfilled during the three years of his remaining life. Meanwhile his health grew from bad to worse; and when the hope arose that possibly he might live if at least one of the temples was built, he sold away his silver plate and some jewels, and began to raise the walls, in one of those many fits of temper to which he became subject to in those days. The foundations were finished; and even the outer walls rose a few feet high; when he discovered some flaw in the calculations (architectural) or the construction and ordered a dismantling of the whole thing. In June 1927, when some friends enquired of him what they could do for him, Gopalakrishnayya gave out his views in a letter which was published in one of the Telugu weeklies of the time. Some time before his death he also published in the *Andhra Patrika* an appeal to his fellow countrymen, which was practically his last Will and Testament, wherein he declared that it was his solemn wish and desire to construct the temples in Ramnagar, and dedicate the Ramnagar land of about twenty acres to those temples; but, as his health was getting critical, if he would not be able to do it himself, he begged of his countryman to kindly respect his last wishes and see that they would be attended to even after his death. The idea was revived after his death in June 1928 and afterwards; but the Memorial Committee which volunteered to take charge of his posthumous works would not allow the grass to grow under their feet; and subsequently the perpetual pilgrimage to jails of our patriots has entailed the postponement of the Ramnagar temples *sine die*.

Such is the historical aspect of the Ramnagar temples; and we may conclude the story with the following extracts from his article on Antarvedi which will show the rationale behind his aspiration.

"Our nation lives in its pilgrimages. National life is nowhere, not even in Mahatma Gandhi's 'Congresses' and 'masses'.

It lives by the temple, it moves by the pilgrim's path, it sleeps in the feasts surfeit of the festival. Don't you deceive yourself, my dear reader, by imagining it is elsewhere than in this. I assure you, I beseech you to believe, it is there and nowhere else. Have you seen with a deep gaze what is about on a festival and beside a temple? It is a grand resolution of society into its ultimate reality. One path, one faith, one continuous hurrah make up the great demonstration of its abiding Oneness. The nation is re-solved. The nation's life is verily the pilgrim's progress. The nation is only there and nowhere, because it hails in its lakhs and millions without any propaganda or pity of its mentors. The nation is there and nowhere, because its logic is lost in love, its science is sunk in its ideal, because its opinions are drowned in its faith, its demands in its worship, its aspirations in its dreams, its hopes and fears in its deliverance from them, the nation is there and nowhere.

"The temple is the nation's synthesis in the concrete. It is the embodied ideal of the race."

CHAPTER XXXIII

LAST INTRUSION INTO POLITICS

The general meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee for 1925 was held at Rajahmundry in the month of May, and Sree Sambamurti was elected its President. Gopalakrishnayya was absent, being both ill and grown indifferent to the sort of Congress work that was being pursued in the country. And during his absence, it was easy for his opponents to see that he was ousted from the provincial executive as well as from the A. I. C. C. membership. And this is how he himself reacted to the performance.

"Though surprised to learn I am elected to the Committee, I am happy...I am not in the executive. First, there is

nothing to execute, and all what I can and ought to execute is best done outside, where the God of all franchises reigns. And why should we take umbrage at the statement, cowardly and false though it be, that I had no faith in Khaddar? The lies of Desabhaktas are as inexorable as the Himalayan blunders of Mahatmas. Sambamurti is already threatening to be the prize-boy! Don't be sorry...nothing is done in that Committee, all gather and damn each other and themselves. No more harm can be apprehended to the country or its genuine workers. Don't you know, when the body dies, the parasites still continue to thrive!....No more of Congress Committees for our minds. Let us think free, live free, and serve free ourselves, our God, and if possible our race."

The above was in June 1925; but a couple of months later, the whirligig of time brought the 'Voluntary liquidation' of the Sambamurti Cabinet, and a fresh election of the Committee, with a purely Swarajist consciousness, had to be called in at Masulipatam. And this unexpected change once again dragged Gopalakrishnayya into the political current, and once again he emerged as the Secretary of the A. P. C. C.

This new secretaryship of the P. C. C. for Gopalakrishnayya lasted for six months, during three of which practically he was too ill to attend to any work. The one incident of this regime was his meeting with Mr. C. R. Reddy, M. A. (Cantab), who, at that time, was a distinguished member of the Andhra Working Committee at Nellore, in December, 1925. Mr. Reddy was a distinguished non-Brahmin gentleman of reputed culture; was formerly Professor and Inspector-General of Education in Mysore; in 1924-25 he was a member of the Madras Legislative Council and had but lately joined the Congress, and subsequently he also became the first Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University, which post he resigned later on, in sympathy with the national struggle of 1930. Gopalakrishnayya had heard of him, of course, but practically they never met before. At this time, Gopalakrishnayya was thinking of enlisting Reddy's support to the Goshti ideals and life; and in course of a letter

dated 21-6-1925, he actually wrote to a friend : " I shall acquaint Mr. C. R. Reddy with all that is to be known of this (Goshti) idea and see if he can be one. I fancy Mr. C. R. Reddy may not condescend ; but, if he does, he will be quite a desirable member."

Mr. Reddy was elected a member of the Andhra executive in the Masulipatam meeting at the instance of Gopalakrishnayya himself, and he attended the Nellore meeting of the Committee. There were two or three passages-at-arms between the two stalwarts even at the first meeting ; but Gopalakrishnayya yielded on all the counts, because he desired not to be discourteous to the new-comer. Mr. Reddy probably did not join the Congress as a zealot ; for, if he did, he would have no fault-finding or picking-up holes in the affairs of the Congress. It is possible that he joined it for diplomatic reasons with a qualified sympathy, of course, for the cause ; and in course of the meeting, he began to indulge in a cheap and cynical criticism of the Congress and its work. Gopalakrishna allowed Mr. Reddy to have his way, and offered only one mild dissent at that meeting. The subject was the P. C. C. funds. Mr. Reddy remarked that the funds raised in 1921 had all been wasted away. Gopalakrishnayya suggested that the 1921 movement was in the nature of a spending one, and not a saving one ; sometimes we would even become *Antarvahini* ! For meeting the current expenses, Mr. Reddy proposed that each district should contribute a hundred rupees. Gopalakrishnayya suggested it might be put at Rs. 116. At once, Mr. Reddy retorted : " This is a thing I can't understand. I don't want these superstitions in all things." Gopalakrishnayya managed to put Rs. 116 for all other districts ; but as Mr. Reddy wouldn't budge, Chittoor would contribute only Rs. 100.

This was a very trivial incident, but it shows the difference between the two types of intellect. Both of them were M. A.s, very brilliant, and each distinguished in his own way. But Gopalakrishnayya was a specialist in our Eastern lore and tradition, while Mr. Reddy swore by the Western ideas alone,

which he imbibed while at Cambridge. Thus while Gopalakrishnayya knew that, by prescribing the 116, 1,116 etc., notation, he would be reviving Indian tradition which had been slumbering in the archives of our orthodoxy, Mr. Reddy would not budge except by the decimal system of reckoning. To our intelligentsia, all Indian traditions are silly superstition, and the "intellectual refuse of the West" the only rational and scientific truth!

In the evening, Mr. Reddy spoke at a public meeting on the 'Present Political Situation.' The address lasted for an hour and a quarter; and it was an elaborate plea for everybody joining and strengthening his United Nationalist Party. At the end of the lecture, Gopalakrishnayya was pressed to say a few words. He had fever at the time; but all the same, he sat on a chair and began some rambling thoughts. For full fifteen minutes, he projected disconnected thoughts and ideas. Everybody began to feel the incoherence of it all; and what was more to the purpose, its want of relation to the subject of the day was being loudly whispered. But suddenly Gopalakrishnayya read a verse from the *Bhagavatam* to illustrate his method, and with a parenthetical remark that, unlike the Euclidean formula, that verse signified the "Indian version of a straight line," he began to gather all the preliminary threads; and it looked as though the magician had first thrown some petals into the air and afterwards converged them all into a fine and fragrant flower. And thereafter, for full thirty minutes, he held the audience spell-bound. The text of the speech was a complete vindication of the ethics of revolution against which Mr. Reddy had thought fit to indulge in cheap and indecorous gibes both at the meeting and earlier. It was one of the greatest speeches ever delivered by Gopalakrishnayya. At the end of it, everybody acclaimed him a hero; Mr. Reddy came down and warmly shook hands with him; and is reported to have told his friends that he "had heard some of the greatest orators of the world; but this was easily the best. It was no wonder that he moved millions."

After his return from Nellore, Gopalakrishnayya was still suffering from fever; all the same, he ventured a journey to

the Cawnpore Congress which cost him again a good lump of health and money. On the 18th and 19th January 1926, there was a meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee at Guntur. The question of the day was the impending elections to the Legislatures. The President 'Andhrakesari' T. Prakasam, asked the Secretary to draft an appeal to the country, whereupon Gopalakrishna framed the following draft "Proclamation to our Andhra fellow-countrymen" and sent it to the President :

"The Indian National Congress, in its sessions at Cawnpore, has called upon the nation to send its representatives in full force to the Councils of the bureaucracy to obtain an answer for the very modest demand presented in its behalf; and in case it comes not or cometh unsatisfactory, it has assured itself and its ranks of obtaining satisfaction by means of the great discipline and action which we have learnt and practised with effect these few years.

"The time expected of the reply is about the end of February, and we have a glimpse of it already through the viceregal prologues and the periodical passages-at-arms on the Council floor. The nation is to be in harness, fully equipped for any eventuality. The restart on the great path would any moment be upon us. We, therefore, crave the indulgence of our Andhra fellow-countrymen for having reminded them of the situation and beg their earnest concern and comradeship in the successful accomplishment of our duty.

"We want men; we want money; and we want an undying faith in the cause. We have to fill the Councils and perhaps gaols. And work is to be commenced straight, immediately. One lakh of rupees and five thousand volunteers who would pledge to work from now on are the preliminary instalment. Every newspaper will fully mobilize its power and patriotism; every library will constitute itself a base of operations; and every national institution will transform itself into a workshop for the campaign.

"Elections and after is the imperious concern of the Congress, the one institution which, despite its possible defects

and defections, dares ever keep its head aloft in the service of the nation; and it deserves supremely well of the Andhras.

“We invite the hastening of our response.”

The President, however, wouldn't allow any such hot stuff; and he himself issued a commonplace 'Appeal' to the Andhra public to return the Congress candidates in large numbers. The difference between the two was fundamental, because the President's aim was the elections and no more, while Gopalakrishnayya chose “elections and after” as his war-cry. No wonder that, in the Madras Legislative Council, at any rate, soon after the elections, the Swarajist Councillors, after coquetting with Dr. Subbaroyan for sometime, supplied two ministers to the Government, after first turning traitors to the Congress. But when Gopalakrishna's draft was overruled by the President, he lost heart in the business; meanwhile his health also deteriorated; and in April 1926, he formally resigned from the Andhra Congress—this time, as it proved to be, for the final occasion.

Gopalakrishnayya was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the District Conference held at Guntur on 27-2-1926. Having been very ill, he could not attend the Conference personally; but he sent a short address, welcoming the delegates, which is as brief as it is beautiful in its thought and expression. On the subject of the work ahead, he said: “I am of opinion that there are only two questions now to consider. In ancient days, on the eve of the Mahabharata war, Dharmaraja and others, though they were entitled for complete Indian independence, could not forsake the tranquillity of the world, contemplated peace, and begged for the grant of five places for themselves. And likewise, we have also requested the Government to grant us Swaraj. And the reply thereto has come. Therefore, while keeping peace in view, the future programme for the attainment of Swaraj has got to be determined. This is most important. And secondly, arrangements have to be made for sending nationalist members to the Legislatures. May my Lord Sree Ramachandra guide you in these two respects!” In the same year, he was also elected

President of the Andhra Maha Sabha at Ellore, but, owing to illness, he had to decline the offer.

Hereafter, Gopalakrishnayya had practically nothing to do with the Congress, but in June 1927, when a friend asked him for his opinion regarding Congress work, he expressed his views at some length in a letter, which was published in the papers at that time and from which the following is a free rendering.

"About the Congress and the doings of the Swarajya Party, it will be a bit bold of me to say anything, because for the last two years, I have been laid up with illness and have not been taking any part in these affairs. It may be, therefore, impertinent on my part to criticise their actions. Nor do I feel capable of offering any such criticism. However, I shall just say a few words, for which I crave your indulgence.

"I feel that the Congress has become lifeless and is adopting alien aims and methods. That it was a foreign plant in the Indian soil may possibly account for this state of affairs in that institution. Mahatmaji tried, indeed, to convert it into a real Indian assemblage. But it has again assumed its original form. Unless many great men like Gandhiji will be born and serve it with their *Tapas*, it is impossible to achieve Swaraj in this way. For instance, take the Hindu-Muslim unity and the Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem. Everybody says that the hearts must unite. Is it possible to achieve it with the help of the votes and resolutions of our capitalistic friends and institutions? They may be obtained through the grace of our men of *Tapas*. The religious urge has not yet dawned into the administration of our institutions. Akbar, Nanak, Kabir and others tried to achieve unity in this country, but they failed. In recent times, Gandhiji attempted to unify the whole of India. But he too could not shake the foundations. He has not been able to enunciate a new law and synthesis. Therefore, it is best for humbler folks like ourselves to bide our time and pray to God and wait for His mercy. The Congress is like a termagant wife to the alien Government;

and I suppose, she will be going on like this till the end of all time, now playing, now cursing, and now showing her displeasure in various ways. Those who like it, may coquet with her when the rulers are not too harsh or pressing. Till the Congress assumes a religious form, it is impossible to obtain our salvation through it.

“The Swarajists originally did not abandon the path of *Tapas*. If the no-changers were Brahma Rishis, these became our Raja Rishis. But latterly, among their leaders, one has died (Mr. Das); another has been suffering from old age (Motilal) etc., and a number of them have lost their virility in various ways. Therefore, defects arose in their aims and methods. For, if they really believe that questions like Hindu-Muslim etc., unity can be solved by means of votes and resolutions, as soon as they entered the Councils, they should have declared their futility; formed a new assembly of all the elected members (filling up vacancies through Congress nomination); and declared to the people:

“Countrymen ! We, the members selected by the electorates of the country, recognising the futility of these governmental institutions, have constituted ourselves into an Independent Indian Assembly (or Republic) on the same lines, and filled up vacancies with other distinguished national servants and are endeavouring to establish Swaraj in India at an early date. Therefore, you who gave us your votes, pay us your taxes also, give us your recognition as the real Indian Legislature, adopt our laws, and help us to wrest Swaraj from the unwilling hands of the bureaucracy. Towards this end, non-violent non-co-operation, Satyagraha etc., will be our weapons.” And with such a declaration, they should have jumped into the fire. Prior to our offering a ‘national demand,’ we should get ready in this manner and then ask for a reply from the Government.

“Such is my heart’s desire. But instead, to ask the opponents to offer their bid, and then to play with it; and knowing that they won’t give us their terms, still to cling to them and adopt all sorts of diplomatic games with their ministers; and to waste our

time and energy in the drafting, amending and revising of our political constitution—is rather a ridiculous affair.

“One word more, and that is about Khaddar. Mahatmaji swears by Khaddar and Khaddar and nothing more than Khaddar. But unfortunately, even that position does not appeal to me, somehow. I am a devotee of Sree Ramachandra. His ways, therefore, serve to me as models. Hanuman went in quest of Sree Sita Devi and found her starving and emaciated. But he did not supply her with food or raiment. Ramachandra himself did not give any ‘message’ to that effect. Even during the war-time, there were no such efforts made. If the Goddess of Indian Liberty is emaciated, then, why on earth should we seek to give her food through Khaddar? When she re-attains her real estate, she will once again get to her full glory. Possibly she has taken to a vow of fasting. The present day famines, draught, scarcity of crops and milk, increase of diseases etc., are indicative of that. It is a well-known fact how the yield has become quite disproportionately thinned to our efforts in this country. Did the Government take away that yield? It is useless to try to throw the blame upon them. Our duty should be to re-establish her *Samsara* as of old. It is futile to say that there is no path other than that of Khaddar.”

To complete this epitaph on the Congress Constructive Programme—which, an eminent countryman of ours once declared, “seems to construct nothing”—we shall quote here the following from the *Ramayana* story which has been referred to by Gopalakrishnayya. According to the *Mahabharatha* version of it, when Sree Ramachandra and His army reached the southern sea, the great King asked His lieutenant, Sugriva, as how to cross that mighty ocean. Then several people suggested several “constructive programmes.” One of them said, building boats; another constructing ships, and so forth. And, says the epic; the Lord simply smiled at these suggestions and said:

“What you have said is good, indeed;

But it is impossible to build boats and ships sufficient for this mighty army;

And if we try to cross this wide sea of a hundred Yojanas.

The enemy is sure to fall upon us and defeat our purpose.

Moreover, such programmes befit only the petty tradesman ;

They cannot enhance the glory of the valiant ;

Therefore, this method does not appeal to me ;

I shall now declare my method."

And, the story goes, Ramachandra declared that he would take to the conquering of the sea by *Tapas* ; by virtue of which, he crossed the sea and got back his queen.

CHAPTER XXXIV

AUTHOR OF THE CHAKRA FLAG

Gopalakrishnayya was a gem of many facets ; and constructively speaking, he gave the ideals of Universal Brahminisation, the Goshti and the Ramadandu, National Education, Parallel Government, the four freedoms (of food, shelter, clothing and freedom of worship), Temples for all etc., and tried to work up some of his ideas into practice. But the then existing conditions in the country—both British Imperialist and the Gandhian Congressional—gave little room for his thought and ideology to take root or flourish. There is one important part of his aspirations, however, which, as destiny would have it, received singular recognition after he was dead and gone ; and though little known among the public today, history will have to recognise the Andhraratna as the unknown author of the *Chakra* idea on our present national flag ; and it is thus that it happened.

The British flag in India, of course, was the Union Jack, with a Star of India—indicative perhaps of our night—impressed

thereon. And a common Gandhian-cum-Gopalakrishna aspiration was that, under Swaraj, it should go. But what should come in its place? Gandhiji's recipe was: The *Charkha* or spinning wheel. But Gopalakrishna did not agree with it.

In 1920, when the Congressional "Tri-colour and Charkha" was not yet born, Gopalakrishnayya devised for his Ramadandu an insignia comprising "the most pure, illustrious and powerful *Vajra*, the emblem of Indra, coupled with the figure of Sri Anjaneya." It may be mentioned that the Ramadandu flag was red and white. Later on, after Gandhiji came out with his National Flag, which in its colours was an improvement on the Besantine "red and green" of the Home Rule flag, symbolising the Hindus and the Musalmans respectively, Gopalakrishnayya tried to accommodate these colours in his flag, though the wheel was one of bone of Dadhichi Maharshi, instead of mere wood as in the Gandhian variety, and the spinner himself became Hanuman, instead of a mere human. Later on, when he was asked to hoist a Congressional flag at Palivela, in East Godavari district, on 26-5-1925, he wrote:

"Of course, I am not attending that Palivela Conference, and I am glad. A few days back, I got a letter from the Secretary, Reception Committee, that they could not accept any suggestion until the All-India Congress Committee acknowledges the Ramadandu flag. One should have thought or known this much that a local variation is always admitted; and even the Union Jack has its modification when hoisted in India (with the Star of India impressed on it). Last year's Alamuru Conference accepted it. The Andhra Volunteer Board accepted it; and even Sjt. Unnava Ramalingam Pantulu was one of the chief 'worshippers' of the flag at Kovvur. Even Hardikar was in ecstasies over it; but our Palivela friends must be quite constitutional. So that's that.

"I am not, of course, sorry, and on the other hand, am quite happy on my services being rejected that way. For one thing, I could avoid all physical worry and trouble. If it were *Ramaseva* (God's service), I couldn't have avoided it, my delicate

health notwithstanding. But a programme of hoisting a mere spinners'-weavers' flag has happily helped me out of it.

"If the flag were to symbolise the nation's soul and its *Sadhana*, both *Bhukti* and *Mukti* must be indicated, and with plenty of graceful and incessant movement. The agent of the movement, *Sadhaka*, must also be represented; and to every political 'Hindu,' a Vanara best symbolises the *Sadhaka*. For he is out to establish *Dharma* for which "Rama Rajyam" is about the best political translation. As the question of Musalmans and others existing under the Congress flag has been solved at Alamur and Kovvur (by accepting to allow alongside of this their own modifications) and as no Musalmans and others worthy of account exist among the volunteers for whose benefit the flag ceremony is particularised, this Ramadandu flag should have been accepted. A flag must have an abiding value and its design must be a work of art. It must at least have some meaning. A simple Charkha may exhibit the sorrow of the stomach merely. It is puerile to think it suffices to indicate the nation's condition and concern. If Mahatma Gandhi also thinks so, ... well, I shut up."

The subsequent story of the flag is briefly told. The above letter was addressed to the author, who then enquired of the Andhraratna as to what his own constructive suggestion would be, if the Charkha was to go. And straight came the reply: "The *Chakra*," pointing to both his Goshti and the Ramadandu ensigns.

It is thus that the *Chakra* idea first arose; and it is a matter of our recent history that its emergence as a symbol on the national flag on the fateful 15th August 1947 was in no small measure due to the Goshti *Tapas* through over two decades, seconded, as it came to be, by the powerful support of Veer V. D. Savarkar at the last moment; and it was Pandit Nehru who gave it the shape of the Asokan wheel, as it was carved on the Saranath abacus, though the Panditji at that time little realised that the abacus wheel, with its twenty-four spokes, was different from the symbolic *Dharma Chakra*, with its

thirty-two petals, which stood on the backs of the four lions at the top of the pillar. Whatever that be, the fact remains that, where every one else in the Congress was worshipping the Gandhian Charkha, it was left only to the Andhraratna to have struck a note of dissent and suggested an alternative, viz., the *Ubhaya taaraka Chakra*. And it cannot be denied that his vision in this one respect at least was most unerring and prophetic.

CHAPTER XXXV

CLOSING YEARS OF LIFE (1926-28)

In this chapter, we shall read of some random thoughts on Gopalakrishnayya's life at this period, which, we have already said, was one of illness and suffering.

The ailment was diagnosed as an advanced stage of tuberculosis in June 1926. He suffered much, of course, both from the disease, and also from poverty. But all the suffering he had for himself; at worst, he allowed just a few of them who were by his side to share a portion of it.

There is an aspect of this illness which was much criticised and probably misunderstood. It was his practice about his diet and medicines. It was alleged that he never cared for the prescribed diet; and Gopalakrishnayya himself possibly helped to spread such an impression. But the criticism was ill-founded. To give but one example, a Brahmin that he was by birth and profession, and a strict vegetarian for decades, at the bidding of the doctors, he took not only to egg but even mutton and soup. The instance was not a solitary and exceptional one but typical. For a disease which was chronic and eating in the extreme, it must be said, on the whole, that he observed his dietetic restrictions fairly well. But when critics faced him with a caution

to be more careful in those matters, he laughed it off, saying that, till the end of his life, he would go on feasting with all the dishes of the six Rasas.

Likewise, it was alleged that Gopalakrishnayya had either refused to take medicines or that he was not taking them regularly. Here too, it was a case of ignorance of facts. To show that he was innocent, one may point to the long list of quack-doctors who handled him—or mishandled rather—during this part of his life, to every one of whom he gave the most loyal and faithful trial. And, what was more, where everybody was treating him for anything other than the real disease. Whoever the doctor, he swallowed even the most bitter recipes, just as he would take sugar-pills.

The one chief source of this misunderstanding, it may be said, was due to his faith. He stuck to the end to the indigenous system of Ayurvedic medicine, which was an article of faith with him, and he never broke the rule, at least during this period of his illness. It was his confirmed conviction that the Indian medicines—Ayurveda and Unani—are vastly superior to the Allopathic recipes; and he used to say: "If a system which has served millions and millions of my countrymen through ages cannot save my life, then it matters not if I die." He recognised, however, that, like all things Indian, our medicines too, and our medicos in particular, have degenerated largely, and we find mostly quackery pervading the land. And it was also his view, which he observed in actual practice, that the Westerners of late have stolen a march over us in India, in respect of external diagnosis; and while not undervaluing, in any degree, the great use of the pulse-test, *Nadi*, he believed that the Western science has developed instruments of fine sensitivity, like the microscope and the thermometer, which might be utilised for verification of the *Nadi* observations. He had considerable respect for the Unani system of medicine also, which, he believed, was equally scientific and efficacious; and at one time, he even wished that he could consult an expert like the late Hakim Ajmal Khan in his own case.

All this, of course, is not to say that he had the benefit of any expert treatment Available in the land, either Ayurvedic or Allopathic. In fact, till he was far advanced in his illness, there was no proper diagnosis at all. And even after the diagnosis, he never had the luxury of an expert treatment. For one thing, he would not touch the medicines of our allopaths who are our State's progeny. And secondly, he was still too misunderstood and maligned even to be seriously considered as being ill ! And there were all sorts of cock and bull stories, which would wean away even a willing friend of a doctor to come of his own accord. And, too, in our slave-mentality, the life of a Gopalakrishna was yet too small a factor for the concern of our South Indian elite, while streams of visitors would flow, daily bulletins rain, and there would be thundering messages from everywhere, if it should be the case of any North Indian boss !

In this tragic drama, there was doubtless the part of poverty which was, indeed, well played. The disease was such as would require, metaphorically speaking, elephants to eat ; for consumption, it is well-known, consumes quickly, and to counteract its mischief, fresh supplies would be necessary to strengthen resistance and vanquish the disease. But in his case, rank poverty was staring him not only in the face, but actively in the belly. Of course, there were doles meted out now and then by kindly souls and friends ; but they were mere "doles." And, too, more than once, he had even to refuse these offers of help because of the ill-grace with which they came.

In November, there was a storm whose ravages he himself described thus : "Recent storm : It just spared us. The big pandal in front of my house *Diwan-i-Am* is no more. The main house, however, has kindly behaved. But the southern verandah is falling and the whole thing may give way at the slightest provocation. Another shed also is gone. Only the cowshed is remaining. If there is any sense left in me, I must either get out or put up a strong edifice."

"Where shall I go to ? Guntur means 30 or 40 rupees a month for the house alone, if at all one could get one. Bapatla

is better. I propose trying it. Otherwise Kuchinapudi for my wife and child and Madras or some hospital for myself (as I can't stay at Kuchinapudi). God knows what is going to happen to me." In the same letter, he wrote: "Health still miserable. (I spat blood for three days, commencing on the storm-day...) Cough worse. Anxieties continue. Hope vanishing. Faith shaky. Darkness ahead. I shall close."

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE END WHICH WAS BUT A BEGINNING (1928)

క. మన సారథి మన సచివుడు
మన వియ్యము మన సఖుండు మన బాంధవుడున్
మన విభుడు గురుడు దేవర
మనలను దిగనాడి చనియె మనుజాధీశా ॥

—భాగవతము

And the end came, both for Gopalakrishnayya and our story.

He died on the 10th June 1928, about 10-45 p. m. And he prepared himself fully for that end, so that, when the final call came forth, he might not say that he was not ready. Apart from the philosophic fortification to face death and conquer it—which, in his case was done as early as the non-co-operation movement—there was an immediate preparation for his end, which extended over two or three months.

For his financial needs, he sold away some land and his library, with which he purchased a site at Guntur near the Jute Mill, and built a cottage. "Grihapravesam" was fixed for the 21st May. It was the hottest part of the year; hot winds were blowing day and night; doors and windows had still to be fitted up; and his friends were warning him not to risk a change for a fortnight. But he was adamant, for, he had finally

decided upon his "reference in space," that is, the place where he had now to die; and he implored of a casual visitor to get him a carriage. And thus he left for his new abode. Once he went, his friends soon followed, to help him in the task of settling down, which, owing to the distance of the place from town, could not have been an easy matter.

With all that, Gopalakrishnayya made a good beginning, and very soon he picked up an admiring audience of a couple of hundred poor men and women, belonging to our lowest castes. Some of them had worked at his cottage and well; several heard of his great reputation; and others came out of curiosity, to see a dying Brahmin who came near their quarters. And, too, there were the Krishna Ashram and the Jute Mill people adjoining, whose good managers helped in the transition; and there were, of course, Messrs N. V. L. N. Rao, S. V. Subba Rao, Machiraju and Mr. Vepa, who were all visiting him by turns. The 'Bangalore Acharyulu' who attended upon him once previously, was re-summoned for treatment; and thus he settled down finally to "Peace if not plenty," in his final abode, which was a cottage without doors, only the front one being hastily improvised just to "keep the dog from the door."

The summer that year was very severe; the sun shone fiercely over his last days on earth; and the unfinished accommodation in his new abode made it particularly irksome in those days. Still, he was happy. And so full of life and humour he was that he invited, in honour of his "Grihapravesam," all those two or three hundred poor people of the vicinity, and at a cost of some forty or fifty rupees, he fed them sumptuously and even arranged a nocturnal street-play for his and their merriment.

After "Grihapravesam," he lived for a fortnight more, and it was a great struggle. For, a life which had to go a full hundred years had to be cut short to less than forty; and within the few days that still remained, the yet active remnants of what we call Life had to wage a deadly battle with the forces of 'Death.'

And it was now a fight to the finish. Gradually the relish for food was gone; and a sort of convulsions began, which entwined his hands and feet, arms, legs and body all into one. It was accompanied with a terrible and, even for that great sufferer, quite unbearable pain. And each convulsion made him humbler than before. There was terrible cough and temperature throughout; and his end was actually expected to come about on the 1st or 2nd of June. But he picked up again; and even while suffering, we are told, he was indulging in his usual, pleasant sallies and jovial conversations with his friends, who were devotedly visiting him during those days.

Meanwhile the day of reckoning arrived. It was the 10th of June 1928; and by the setting of the moon, he said, was a crisis in his life. For the few days previously, the pain and suffering were not so intense, and that day also, which was a Sunday, he began normally. Friends came in the morning and went back for their noon-day meal, for they felt there was nothing serious—it was all a lull. But whence was that tiny, dark cloud towards the evening, betokening a storm at hand! It was 4 P. M.; and he was in an agony. The Jute Mill Engineer dropped in casually, for a chat; but he found Mrs. Gopalakrishna weeping. At once, he went back to the Mill; phoned up Messrs N. V. L. N. Rao, S. V. Subba Rao, everybody from the town and the municipality; but strangely, they were all away. By about 5 P. M., the pain abated a bit; the Mill Manager went back and found Gopalakrishna quiet. The Doctor Acharyulu came, with some friends; examined the pulse; and felt it was beating steady. An hour later, Mr. Rao and others dropped in hurriedly and found him better for an hour or more, they all spent an usual, jolly company. Everybody thought that all would still be well. Gopalakrishna alone had some doubts. He cross-examined the doctor about the pulse; told him to speak the truth; and asked him point-blank whether the night would pass. The doctor assured him that it would. But the patient would not take any risks. So he got a mat by his side; commanded that, if necessity arose, he should be removed thereon; and shortly after, they all left. At about 9 P. M., Mr. Rao and company

came back from the town; Gopalakrishna was still in his bed; and there was nothing extraordinary to be noticed. But about 10 o'clock, there was a fit again. Subba Rao and Narasimha Rao could not even approach the patient; so intense was the suffering this time. After ten minutes of terrible hooping, a huge phlegm was spat out. A moment of respite; then it came again; cough and convulsions combined; the phlegm got choked up in the throat. He waved his hand; was removed from the cot; and expired almost the same moment, about 15 minutes less 11. And the moon also set shortly, afterwards, as if in sympathy.

In that mid, dark night, in that solitary poor cottage, the new orphaned boy of five was innocently sleeping; but the good and widowed wife was weeping over her irreparable loss; while the few friends that were there suppressed their sorrow and sat silent. Meanwhile came the battalion of his "poor relations," his newly-acquired neighbourhood of labourers; and every one of them, man, woman and child, stayed on the night, to express sympathy with an illustrious soul, on whose regal body they gazed with wonder and grief, by the aid of that flickering death-lamp.

The night wore away. One after another, friends and people were gathered to pay their last homage to the hero now lying-in-state. It was decided that, out of what were generally believed to be his wishes, the body should be conveyed to Ramnagar for cremation. A few friends gave a little money; some buses and cars were hired; a band of music—which he loved so well all his life—was arranged; and the body, with an elongated caste mark, and decorated with green leaves, was placed in a car; and the procession moved on, through village after village to Chirala. *En route* people paid their last homage to their illustrious leader, to whom they bowed and offered Arathi and gave coconuts and fruit-offerings.

Ramnagar was reached by 4 P. M., where assembled ten to fifteen thousand people to honour their chief. The body was taken round Chirala and Perala in procession. And after its

return to Ramnagar, there was torrential rain for an hour, as if Nature too had wept! After it stopped, the last rites were performed, in a simple Brahminical manner.

That was the end—the physical end—of our twice dear, most esteemed and beloved Gopalakrishnayya. But, of his Spirit, shall we not say—

“Gopalakrishna is dead ; long live his mighty Spirit !”

CHAPTER XXXVII

GOPALAKRISHNA : THE MAN

In this chapter, we shall read of ‘Gopalakrishna : the Man’ not only as a review of the general impressions created by our hero in the course of the former pages, but to serve as an aid for a strong grip over the real nature and character of the man and his work.

It is too soon perhaps for us to judge the influence of Gopalakrishnayya upon the life and destiny of our people. Yet it cannot be rash to describe him as a *Sadhaka*, or, an experimenter in our real or religious life ; and any future worker of the human laboratory in the Andhradesa, at any rate, it may be presumed, must take up the work where he left it, whether it is in social reconstruction or political emancipation, human thought or world endeavour. For in one word, he was at least a Brahmin, the seeker—if not yet the *Brahma*, the Creator of a new thought and life.

But what of his lack of *Sadhana*—want of discipline?

In *Sadhana*, there are two ways—one the *Satru Sadhana*, and the other *Mitra Sadhana*—the methods of the opposite and the apposite, as he himself described them.

As a musician, he was himself a no mean singer,* and he definitely turned the tide of the Andhra music towards the devotional and the religious. His singing of the Tarangams and *Dasaradhi satakam*, for example, is acknowledged to be unrivalled.

His mastery over the English and Telugu languages perhaps forms a separate study by itself; while his extempore verses before Sree Ranganadha reveal the hold he had even over the Sanskrit muse. The revival of the husbandship of the author over one's language—"Vani is my queen", as against the "*Mathru Bhasha*" or mother-tongue—cult obtaining around us, is peculiarly his own among our recent writers.

The volume of literary and other works left by Gopalakrishnayya is not very considerable, indeed; but the quality of what remains is such as to rank him among the highest of our authors, while, as a critic, he has changed the destinies of Telugu literature, art, poetry and drama, by turning its vision from the surface inwards.

But it is as a conversationist that Gopalakrishna would live for ever—and, oh! for a 'Bozzy' who could record his spoken word, which, alas, is now mostly lost!

As an orator, Dr. C. R. Reddy once declared him to be. "the most wonderful orator he had heard in the world; it is no wonder that the moved millions."

In politics, every one has heard of his Chirala-Perala campaign, which was really an attempt at running a parallel Government; but that is perhaps but a small part of his contribution. And his place as a political thinker and worker is yet to be adjudged. For example, his conception of political sovereignty, viz., as the Fatherhood of God over His people, and of its location in the seats of His throne, rather than in the King, King-in-Parliament, or even the 'People' of the current, Western, political theory, is potential of great, almost revolutionary changes in the scientific thought of the World's polity; while the theory of the

**Kalyani* was his favourite. *Ragam*

husbandship—*Bhupatitwam*—of the ruler over the country is capable of supplying the motive-power required for the emancipation of our unfortunate land.

As a revivalist, he was responsible for the unearthing of a good many of our ancient traditions, including the *Smṛiti* constitution ; Dharmic Law ; Parishadic Sabha ; the Palm-leaf address ; “ Our Parliamentary privileges ” ; the *Sreemukham* ; *Saptaham* ; *Deeksha sangham* ; the Prabha ; and even the Rs. 116 standard which he adopted for his bowl has helped at least his successors in the art of begging and has permanently revived a tradition. In all these respects, he understood the language of the people and revived the ideas and methods which have long slumbered in the land.

In the field of our religion and society, his Brahmana synthesis is his greatest contribution to the Indian life and world thought ; and though not many were found favouring it at the time when it was first propounded, it is a happy sign that the country is coming more and more into line with his thought on the subject ; and it is hoped that the day is not far off when Gopalakrishnayya will be proclaimed the prophet of a new world harmony.

As an organiser, his Ramadandu and Chirala experiments are two of the most wonderful in our recent history ; and while we have no greater achievement to our credit in recent Andhra than the Chirala campaign, his Ramadandu has served as the model for the Hanuman Dal, Mahavir Dal and the Ramasena of Dr. Moonje.

As an intellectual of the highest eminence, he can be compared to such supermen as Sree Aurobindo Ghosh ; and if the latter aspired to “ divinise man,” Gopalakrishnayya tried, in his own way, to “ humanise the gods ” ; and while Aurobindo dreamt of synthesising our scriptures, as for instance, when he said that hereafter our scriptures shall be the Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Purana, Tantra, and not excluding the Bible and the Koran ; Gopalakrishna had successfully harmonised the prophets of the world, by converting the Dasavatars into the Dwadasa,

thus finding a place for the Christ and Mohamed in the pantheon of the prophets of the world; and he also proclaimed, as a basis for the new World's Religion, a synthetic federation of the *Swadharma* of all, which includes "the Hindu Dharma, Muslim Dharma, Christian Dharma, Parsi Dharma, Sikh Dharma etc." And even his Brahmanism is a more objective form of Sree Aurobindo's jail message of Sanatana Dharma or Eternal Religion.

As a man and friend, alas, he was peerless great. "You eat", he told a friend once, "and that fills my stomach." And it did, indeed, too.

And in society, he was the pink of manners and courtesy, though he added to the buoyancy and mirth of the company as none else could.

Above all, as a devotee, Gopalakrishnayya shines as the prince of our Bhaktas. He believed in the doctrine of faith—*Bhakti*—as the only safe guide in this Kaliyuga or materialistic age; and choosing Sri Ramachandra as his *Ishta Daivam*, he related everything to Him and tried to fill the world with His glory. He read Rama in politics, and Swaraj meant to him not only Rama-Raj, but even the letters 'Ra-ma' were interpreted as 'Ra is Rajyam' and 'Ma is ours'; he sensed Rama in our art, and said the only work of art worth the name in Andhra is a Ramalayam or a temple of God; in language, because the mistress of Telugu letters is the daughter-in-law of Sri Ramachandra; in Volunteer organisation, which came to him as the Ramadandu; in village-building, as Ramnagar; in hartal, which meant to him a *Rama-Bhajana*; in currency, as *Rama-Raseedulu*; and the flag as *Hanumat-Dhwaja*—and all action was *Ramakaryam* and all existence full of Ramachandra—అంతా రామమయమ్.

In all these respects, it may be conceded readily that his achievement was still small, even crude and incomplete; but it is necessary to remember that he was concerned only with ideals and not yet with the outer, existing realities, which was

due to certain limitations of time and circumstances in the country; and moreover, if we remember that not only he died at a very early age, inside of forty, but even while he lived, he was easily the most maligned, misunderstood and even persecuted man of Andhradesa; and also bear in mind what the best of us had been at the age of thirty-nine; what a Mahatma Gandhi was at 39; what an Aurobindo Ghosh was at 39; we can imagine what our Gopalakrishna was capable of, if he was born in better circumstances or had he lived on to maturer age and time!

SWASTI

*Peace be unto all men
May the kings rule justly
Plenty ever to Brahmin and the cow
Bliss to all worlds!*

*May Parjanya send forth timely rains
May the earth yield plentiful crops
May the curse of the country be gone
And the Brahmin be without fear!*

*May the childless beget children
Those with sons beget grandsons
May the poor become rich
And every one live on for a hundred autumns!*

Aum! Tat! Sat!

Swasti Sree Krishnarpanamastu.

APPENDIX (See Page 35)

The objects and methods of the Brahmana Goshti, as drafted by the Andhra Ratna originally (vide Chapter vi), are as follows :

ఆర్యా,

ఈ క్రింద నుదహరింపబడు లక్ష్య లక్షణములతో మేము బ్రాహ్మణ గోష్ఠి నొకదాని నేర్పరుప దలచికొన్నాము. తా మీ గోష్ఠియం దొకరై జీవయాత్ర సాధించగల బ్రాహ్మణోత్తముని యెఱింగి తమ రిందు సభ్యులు కావలె నని కోరుచు తమ కీ విన్నవము నంపు కొన సాహసించుచున్నాము. తమ యంగీకారమును దెలుప వేడు కొనుచున్నాము.

గోష్ఠీసమావేశము శ్రీరామనగరున ప్రతినెలయు పూర్ణిమకు సామీప్యమున నుండు భానువారమున జరుగును. ఆరోజు ఉదయమునకు విచ్చేసి యా సభ్యులలో నెవరైన యొక్కరి ఆతిథ్యము నారోజున కంతకును అంగీకరించి ఆరోజంతయు గోష్ఠీవిషయములు చర్చించుచు మరునాటికి తమ తావులకు వెళ్ళునట్లు యేర్పాటు. తమ యంగీకారము తెలిపిన వెంటనే మొదటి సమావేశ వివరములు తమ కంపు కొనెదము.

లక్ష్యములు :

౧. “తత్వమసి”, “అహంబ్రహ్మాస్మి”, “సర్వంఖల్విదంబ్రహ్మ”, ఇత్యాది అద్వైతప్రసిదాదకములగు శ్రుతులుమాత్రము పరమార్థములుగను, ధర్మనిర్ణయాదులందు సహితము పరమప్రమాణములుగను యంగీకరించుటయు, నమ్ముటయు, త న్నియమితములగు మార్గముల ననుసరించియే వ్యావహారిక, పారమార్థిక వ్యవస్థల నన్నింటియందును జీవయాత్రను నడిపింప, సాధింప కృతనిశ్చయములై యుండుట.

౨. బ్రహ్మజ్ఞానాప్యేషణము, బ్రహ్మపదార్థ సాధనము జీవితమందు సర్వకాల సర్వావస్థలయందును ప్రధానలక్ష్యముగా నంగీకరించి సమస్తమైన వృత్తులను యిందు సమన్వయముచేసి, నడచుకొనుచా

రగుచు, బ్రాహ్మణ సంజ్ఞను స్వీకరించి, అట్టి దీక్షను గ్రహించి జీవ యాత్రను జేయుట.

లక్షణములు :

౧. ఈ వై సుదహరింపబడిన లక్ష్యము నంగీకరించి బ్రాహ్మణ దీక్షను బూనిన బ్రాహ్మణులు పదిమందికి తక్కువలేకుండా నొక గోష్ఠి నేర్పరచుకొనుచు, తమ తమ జీవితములు తద్దర్మానుష్ఠానమున జరిగించుకొనుట.

౨. ఈ లక్ష్య లక్షణములను యథాశక్తి సోదరప్రజలకు విన్నవించుచు యీ బ్రాహ్మణ ధర్మమును లేక మతమును వారియందు వ్యాప్తి చేయుచుండుట.

INDEX

Abhinaya Darpanam	12	Andhra & Andhras	4, 13, 19, 20, 26, 28, 54, 56, 60,
Abraham	111		62, 93, 96, 98, 99, 100, 127,
Abu, Mt.	120		130, 133, 135, 165, 167, 169,
Advaita	36, 108, 123, 125, 126, 131, 143, 161, 195		170, 171, 172, 176, 178, 179,
Adi Sankara, <i>See Sankara</i>			184, 189, 191, 199, 202, 203,
Agni Homa & Agni Kula	120, 149	Andhra Conference	205, 206, 221, 222, 223, 224
Ahmedabad	46, 160	Andhradesa	26, 27, 28, 51, 72, 75, 99, 156
A. I. C. C.	54, 63, 98, 155, 158, 159, 160, 170, 171, 172, 177, 180, 187, 201, 211		3, 22, 65, 131, 139, 170, 171,
A. J. Kalasala	15, 23, 24, 30, 38, 141, 184	Andhra Girvana Vidyalayam	176, 177, 185, 220, 221, 225
Akalis	130, 136, 159, 168, 221	Andhra Mahasabha	26, 27, 28, 51, 99, 207
Akbar	161, 175, 207	Andhra Movement	3, 4
Alamur	60, 62, 173, 174, 176, 211	Andhra Patrika	200
Ali Brothers	166	Andhra Ratna	1, 35, 37, 51, 73, 74, 99, 132,
Alipore	107		139, 156, 210, 212, 213
Allah	129, 161	Andhra Shorthand	17
Allopanishad	100	Andhra Students' Conference	3
Allopathic	214, 215	Andhra Vidyapeetha Goshthi <i>See Goshthi</i>	
Amalapuram	190, 198	Andrews, C. F.	130
America	147	Anjaneya <i>See Hanuman</i>	
Ananda K. Coomaraswamy	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 51	Anjaneyulu, Tangirala	14
Anantapur	99, 177	Annapurua	150
		Ansari, M. A.	159

Antarctic 126
 Antarvedi 198, 200
 A. P. C. C. 60, 94, 100, 170, 177 sq., 183 sq., 187, 201, 203, 205, 206
 Apparao, B. V. 27
 Arctic 112, 126
 Aristotelian Society 13, 33, 35
 Arthur Geddes 16
 Arundhati 116
 Aryan & Aryavarta 112, 131, 196
 Ashramas 118
 Asoka 121, 212
 Atlantic 126
 Atman 109, 118
 Aurobindo Ghose 3, 37, 38, 106, 107, 109, 110, 125, 195, 223, 225
 Avatar 13, 52, 125, 159, 161
 Ayurveda 9, 214, 215
 Badarika 122, 123
 Bali 52, 74, 76, 77, 78
 Bandar *See Masulipatam*
 Bankimchandra Chatterji 4
 Bapatla 2, 7, 13, 98, 172, 215
 Bardoli 3, 45, 93, 94, 103, 104, 141, 142, 151, 161
 Belgium Congress 169, 186, 195, 196, 198
 Benares *See Kasi*
 Bengal 3, 4, 146
 Berhampore 72, 74, 75, 83, 99, 175

Berlin 9
 Besant 211
 Bezwada 24, 63, 65, 98, 99, 140, 166, 172, 177, 183, 187, 192
 Bezwada programme 100, 101
 Bhadrachalam 100, 101
 Bhagavad Gita *See Gita*
 Bhagavata 67, 197, 204, 216
 Bhagavata Marga 164
 Bhakti 126
 Bharadwaja 118
 Bharata Ratna 74, 132
 Bharata Varsha 134
 Bhimavararam 98
 Bhupathittwam 5, 223
 Bible 8, 45, 223
 Bolshevik 153, 189
 Bombay 37, 46, 159, 171, 192
 Borsodi 125
 Bose, J. C. 72
 Bozzy 222
 Brahma 29, 111, 208
 Brahmachary & Brahmacharya 113, 114, 115, 117, 118
 Brahman 17, 36, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114, 118, 120, 122, 138
 Brahmanas 107, 109, 112

Brahmin, Brahminical & Brahminism

1, 4, 19, 28, 35, 107, 108,
109, 110, 111, 112, 114,
115, 117, 118, 120, 122,
131, 134, 137, 138, 139,
142, 143, 144, 145, 146,
147, 148, 149, 150, 171,
194, 197, 207, 213, 217,
220, 221, 224, 226

Brahmana Dharma

35, 36, 144, 223, 227

Brahmana Goshti

122

Brahma Sutra

28, 220

Brahma's Temple

107, 108, 109, 111,

Brahminism & Brahminisation

145, 148, 210

Brahminism, Rise & Growth

112 sq.

Brahminism, Decay

121 sq., 138, 143, 144

Brahmopadesam

5, 138, 142, 143

Britain & British

6, 9, 18, 23, 38, 48, 49, 50, 51,
80, 85, 94, 102, 127, 128, 130,
132, 134, 152, 153, 165, 166,
173, 210

Britford

10, 11

Buddha & Buddhism

16, 107, 108, 120, 121, 122,
123, 125, 126, 143

Burma

121, 126

Burakatha

20

Burra Satyanarayana

189, 190

Calcutta

Calcutta Special Congress

37, 38, 46, 103

Cambridge

51

Caste

118, 137, 147, 148

Cawnpur Congress

205

Cauvery

132

Central Asia

112, 121, 122

Ceylon *See Lanka*

Chakkrai chetty

135, 136

Chakra

210, 212, 213

Charkha

129, 132, 152, 162, 163,
167, 211, 212, 213

Charvaka

121

Chatussaagaras

125

Chhandala *See untouchable*

China

62, 121, 126

China Ganjam

66

Chirala & Perala

13, 15, 28, 29, 45, 46, 48, 52, 53,
61, 62, 63, 65, 67, 68, 73, 75, 83,
84, 86, 93, 94, 97, 98, 99, 130,
136, 139, 140, 177, 186, 191, 192,
199, 219

Chirala-Perala

94, 96, 103

(Movement)

129, 166, 222, 223

Chirala-Perala

(Movement) Its causes 45 sq.

Chirala-Perala

(Movement) Some incidents 63 sq.

Chirala-Perala

(Movement) Its effects 92 sq.

Chittoor

203

Europe & European	6, 16, 18, 86, 91, 98, 111, 134	4
Exodus	67	
Fa-Hian	121	
Four Freedoms	210	
Gajendra	197	
Ganapati Raj, Lt. Col.	189	
Gandhi & Gandhian	3, 13, 29, 33, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 76, 79, 80, 84, 87, 91, 94, 95, 98, 99, 104, 105, 109, 125, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 135, 137, 138, 142, 143, 151, 152, 153, 155, 160, 161, 162, 166, 167, 171, 172, 173, 177, 178, 186, 195, 196, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 225	
Gandhi Maha Vidyalayam	184	
Gangadhararao Deshpande	159	
Ganga	146, 157	
Gaya & Gaya Congress	150, 153, 154, 155, 158	
Gayatri	115, 143, 144, 146, 148, 149	
Gayatri Upanishad	118	
Germany	4	
Gita	41, 110, 122, 168, 223	
"Gita Rahasya"	106	
Godavari	198	
Godavari District Conference	60, 63, 98, 173	
Gokhale		
Gopalakrishnayya : <i>See Andhra Ratna also</i>		
Gopalakrishnayya at A. J. Kalasala	23 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya at Mahanandi	26 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya as author of Chakra flag	210 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya as orator	70, 204, 222	
Gopalakrishnayya as journalist	192 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya as The man	220 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya on law	88	
Gopalakrishnayya on Money & Economics	2, 8	
Gopalakrishnayya on education	7, 37 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya on parallel government	94, 95, 208, 210, 222	
Gopalakrishnayya on Prahlada sadhana	66, 67	
Gopalakrishnayya on Swaraj	90	
Gopalakrishnayya on woman	102	
Gopalakrishnayya and Vivekananda	145 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya's Address to Trees	69 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya's Early aspirations	13 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya's Last Will & Testament	200	
Gopalakrishnayya's Masulipatam speech	139 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya's Message	108, 210	
Gopalakrishnayya's Soundarya Mahal Speech	135 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya's Trial at Berhampore	74 sq.	
Gopalakrishnayya's Trial at Masulipatam	82 sq.	
Gopalareddy	50	
Goshti : Constitutional	30	
Goshti : Constructional	32	

Nagpur & N. Congress 51, 97, 98, 158, 159, 160
 Name of our Religion 196
 Nanak 161, 175, 207
 Narasimha, Lord 98, 198
 Narasimha Rao, N. V. L. 7, 217, 218, 219
 National Anthem 193
 National Education 5, 25, 38sq., 149, 181,
 183, 184, 185, 210
 National Idealism 13, 192
 National Service 181, 183
 National Unity *See Unity*
 Navarasapoorthi 87
 Nava Yuga 85
 Nehru, J. 212
 Nellore 60, 202, 203, 204
 Neo-Brahminism 127, 137, 139
 Nirvana 143
 Nivedita, Sister 138
 Nizam 61, 101
 No-changers 151, 153, 154, 158, 159, 161,
 171, 178, 195, 199, 207
 Non-Brahmins 131, 137, 138, 142, 145, 207
 Non-co-operation 13, 27, 28, 38, 50, 60, 73, 82, 86,
 87, 89, 95, 97, 123, 130, 135,
 151, 152, 153, 162, 177, 188,
 208, 216
 Ongole 45, 53
 Ootacamund 18, 19

Our Ideal 193
 Pacific 126
 Palestine 121
 Pamidipadu 176
 Panagal Rajah 48, 68
 Pandavas 120
 Parallel Government 94, 95, 208, 210, 222
 Pargiter 120
 Parjanya 226
 Parsi 90, 224
 Pattabhi Sitaramayya, B. 19, 24, 49, 180, 190
 Pentland, Lord 22
 Penuganchiprole 1
 Perala *See Chirala*
 Phoenix 191
 Pickwickian 33
 Pondicherry 3, 107
 Ponnur 73, 98
 Prabha 173, 223
 Prahlada Sadhana 66
 Prakasam, T. 60, 139, 205
 Prince of Wales 28, 78, 103
 Princep, H. T. 37
 Pro-change *See Swarajist*
 Punjab 27, 51, 52, 78, 84, 86, 136, 170
 Puranas 76, 145, 149, 161
 Puri 122, 123
 Purushardhas 25, 118

- Qur India** 95
Quran 8, 45, 161, 223
Raghavendra Rao, E. 127, 151, 155, 166
Rajagopalachary, C 19, 20, 21, 23, 63, 98,
175, 190, 198, 201
Rajhmundry 120, 149
Rajputs 77, 81, 91
Rakshasas 43, 52, 54, 61, 72, 87, 91, 99, 100,
102, 120, 128, 132, 198, 205, 209, 210
Ramachandra 53 sq., 63, 65, 96, 98, 99, 100, 163,
165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 175, 176,
181, 186, 192, 210, 211, 212, 223
Rama Dandu 6
Ramachandramurty 175, 211
Ramalingam, Unnava 53
Ramamurty, S. V. 145, 146
Ramakrishna Order 127
Ramanadhan, S. 8, 13, 29, 33, 35, 56, 61, 66, 140,
187, 189, 190, 191, 192, 198, 199,
200, 219, 220, 224
Ramanagar 212, 224
Rama Raj 61, 62
Rama Sena 127
Ramaswamy Naicker, E. V. 209
Ramayana 106, 131, 132, 133, 136, 198, 221
Ranganadha 135
Rangaswamy Iyengar 53, 74, 76, 77, 81, 91
Ravana
- Red Army** 60
Red Cross 164, 166, 168
Reddy, C. R. 187, 202, 203, 204, 222
Reading, Lord 80, 153
"Reference in Space" 24, 25, 28, 52, 217
Religion 45, 131, 172, 196
Repalle 96, 172
Rienzi 152
Rig Veda 116, 117, 118
Rishis 145
Ross 21, 22
Round Table Conference 80, 153
Russia 89, 153
Rutherford 75, 81, 99
Sadhana 3, 30, 111, 169, 192, 196, 198
Salisbury 10, 11, 12
Sama Veda 118, 149
Sambamurti, B. 167, 172, 181, 201, 202
Sanatana Dharma 106, 107, 108, 123, 224
Sandhya 19, 110, 114
Sankara & Sankarisation 27, 108, 122, 123, 125,
126, 131, 137, 138,
143, 193
Sankara Iyer 127
Sanskrit 132
Santanam, K. 127
Sapthaham 159, 163, 167, 175, 223
Saranath 212

Satatchandra	145	Sudra	117, 119, 121, 122, 126, 143, 146, 148
Sarvasaropaniṣad	118	Swadeshi	4, 23
Satanic Government	48	Swadharna	51, 88, 89, 90, 168, 224
Sastry, T. S.	127, 190	Swaraj, Swarajists and	4, 51, 52, 53, 54, 61, 76, 78,
Savarkar, V. D.	212	Swarajya Party	81, 82, 87, 89, 91, 92, 94, 98,
Savitri	102		102, 103, 104, 105, 130, 132, 136,
Scotland	6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 178		139, 141, 144, 152, 153, 154, 156,
Scouts	55, 163, 165, 166		158, 159, 160, 162, 164, 168, 171,
Sedition	82		185, 186, 194, 195, 196, 202, 205,
Servants of India Society	15		206, 207, 208, 211, 224
Shaikat Ali	60, 64, 100, 162	"Swarajya"	127
Shinto	8	Swasti	39, 110, 193, 226
Shraddhananda Swami	166, 168	Syed Murtuza Saheb	127
Sikh	90, 128, 139, 159, 167, 168, 224	Tagore, R.	87
Simon Commission	137	Tamil & Tamilnad	128, 132, 133, 135
Sita Devi	55, 100, 102, 209	Tantra	16
Sitamma	1	Tapas	103, 118, 146, 207, 208, 210, 212
Sivaramayya	1	Temples	33, 34, 36, 198, 199, 200, 201, 210
Smriti	131, 137, 138, 148, 199, 223	Tenali	98, 107
Social Problem	161, 162, 196	Theosophist	165
Some N. C. O. Politics	97 sq.	Tibet	121, 126
Soundarya Mahal Speech	127, 135 sq.	Tilak	3, 104, 106, 112
Sreenivasa Iyengar, S.	45, 130, 166, 191	Tilak Swaraj Fund	94, 154, 155, 175
Steerangam	105, 127, 131, 135, 136	Tirumantra	143
Stringeri	122, 123, 132	Toynbee	125
Subbarao, Ravula	217, 218, 219	Trafalgar square	88
Subbarao, S. V.	205	Trichinopoly	51, 82, 93, 97, 106, 127, 128, 131
Subbayaṉ, Dr.		Tyagaraya Chetty, P.	81

Ujjain 16
 Unani 214
 Union Jack 210, 211
 Unity 56, 90, 103, 131, 136, 141, 145, 156, 157, 160, 161, 162, 163, 167, 174, 175, 194, 207, 208
 Upanayana 5, 113, 114, 115, 145
 Universal Religion 82, 108, 124, 125, 138, 145, 148, 197, 224
 Upanishads 109, 112, 116, 122, 126, 145, 196, 223
 Untouchables and 118, 126, 129, 137,
 Untouchability 138, 142, 143, 146, 148, 160, 161, 162, 185
 Vadarevu 28, 29
 Vallabhbhai Patel 151
 Vande mataram 3, 4, 153
 Varanasi *See Kari*
 Varna *See Caste*
 Vasista 120
 Veda & Vedic 8, 45, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 121, 122, 123, 131, 137, 145, 146, 149, 223
 Vedanta 131
 Vepa 217
 Venkata Ramanayya, Iyyanki 165
 Venkatappayya, Konda 66, 97, 158, 167, 178, 202
 Venkataramana Iyengar, C. V. 45
 Vetapalem 68
 Vidyaapeetha Goshthi 12, 26, 28, 30, 37, 38, 43, 45, 52, 53, 65, 140, 191, 202, 203, 210, 212,

Vijayanagar 133
 Vijayawada *See Bezwada*
 Visakhapatnam 174
 Viswa Brahmins 143
 Viswamitra 118, 143
 Viswanadha 150, 151, 157, 158
 Vithalbhair Patel 38, 109, 123, 125, 145, 147, sq.
 Vivekananda & G. K. 145 sq.
 Volunteer 60, 155, 163, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 181, 183, 186, 212, 224
 Vyasa 114, 117, 118, 143, 146
 Wells, H. G. 125
 Wembly 196
 William Bentinck 37
 Willingdon 81
 Women 102, 117, 121, 122
 Yajna 118
 Yajnopavecta 149
 Yajur Veda 117
 Yervada 129, 142
 "Yoga Vasista" 145
 "Young India" 48, 98
 Zaghul Pasha 99
 Zeitgist 151
 Zend Avesta 8

“Life and Message of D. Gopalakrishnayya”

SOME OPINIONS OF THE FIRST EDITION

“The Life and Message” of our Andhra Ratna is an inspiring book. It gives a very good account of the outer and inner life of the hero.

Dr. C. R. REDDY

* * * *

“In publishing the ‘Life and Message’ of Gopalakrishnayya, Mr. Subba Rao not only satisfies a long-felt need for a faithful life-history of the Andhra Ratna, but does justice to the cause of that great soul.....Coming, as it does, from the pen of one who, for several years, had been a close colleague and collaborator of the Andhra Ratna, the book is faithful throughout, and brings to light all the circumstances, a consideration of which is absolute necessity in estimating the life and outlook of Gopalakrishnayya, who had been unfortunately misunderstood by many in his own day.”

—*The Indian Express*

* * * *

The late Andhra Ratna, “was a leader who, by his extraordinary personal magnetism, was able to inspire deep loyalties. He has immortalised himself in the political history of India by his heroic stand at Chirala. But his main life-work lay in other fields. He was one of the very few political leaders that the Nationalist movement has produced, who has realised the supreme importance of India attaining her own spiritual centre and reasserting the claims of her own culture. His message of ‘Universal Brahminism’, and his projects for its propagation—the Andhra Vidyapeetha Goshti, the Ashram at Ramnagar with its temples, the Rama Dandu or ‘divine army’ which he organised, and the paper that he established and ran for a short time—were all informed by an intuitive grasp of the causes of India’s decay and the revolution in national thought and life that was needed to arrest it.....Mr. Subba Rao is at

his best when.....he is carried away by the sheer glamour of Gopalakrishnayya's romantic life. It is an unforgettable story that he tells of the wonderful address the Andhra Ratna delivered to an audience of palmyrah trees."

—*The Hindu*

* * * *

"Every lover and admirer of Sree Gopalakrishnayya should read this Biography."

—*The Madras Mail*

* * * *

The Brahma Sree has to be congratulated on his bringing out this book.....It ought to be read by one and all."

—*New Orissa*

* * * *

The book constitutes an earnest attempt to vindicate and almost to rehabilitate Gopalakrishnayya's life and cause."

—*Federated India*

* * * *

“ఇట్టి గోపాలకృష్ణుని దివ్యచరిత్రమును వివరముగా శ్రీయుత గుమ్మడిదల సుబ్బారావుగారు వ్రాసి ప్రచురించిరి. గోపాలకృష్ణుని యెడల శ్రీ సుబ్బారావుగారి భక్తిప్రేమలు ఆంధ్రు లెఱుంగనివి కావు. జననమాదిగ గోపాలకృష్ణుని చేష్టలు, చేతలు, భాషణములు, గుణములు, లోపములు, కష్టములు, సుఖములు శ్రీ సుబ్బారావుగారి గ్రంథమున వివరించిరి. గోపాలకృష్ణుని జీవితమున కిది వ్యాఖ్యానమై యున్నది. గ్రంథము చక్కని ఆంగ్లభాషలో వ్రాయబడి అనేక చిత్రపటములతో శోభిల్లుచున్నది. ఆంధ్రమహాజనులకు అభిమాన పాత్రమైన యీ జీవితచరిత్ర నందరును చదివి గోపాలకృష్ణుని జీవితమును సుగమముగా గూర్చుకొనుటకు ! ”